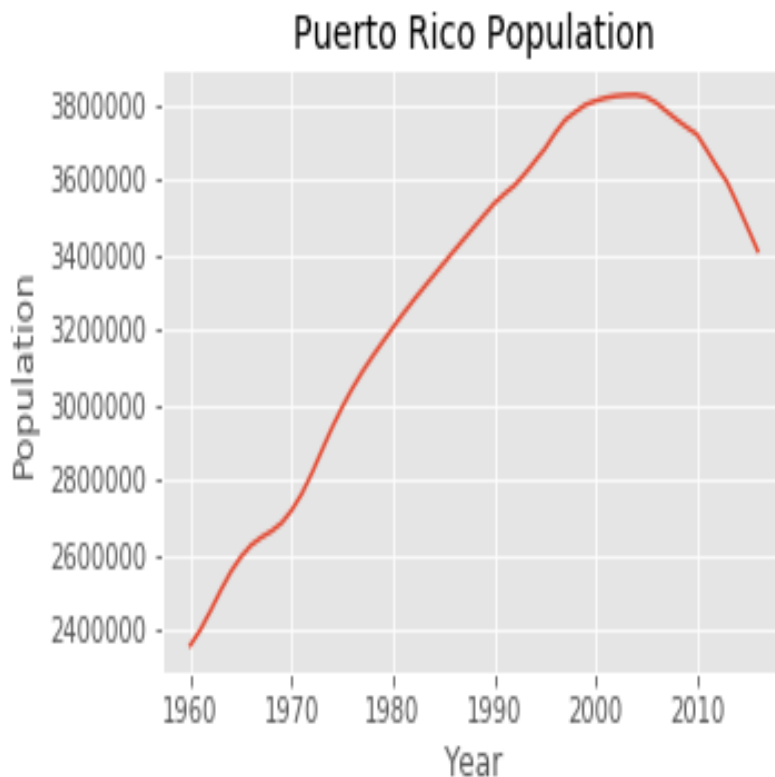


# Puerto Rico



Puerto Rico (pɔˈrtʁiˈko, Spanish: pwɔˈrtiˈrik) (Spanish for "Rich Port"), officially the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico (Spanish: Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico, lit. "Free Associated State of Puerto Rico") and briefly called Porto Rico, is an unincorporated territory of the United States located in the northeast Caribbean Sea. An archipelago among the Greater Antilles, Puerto Rico includes the main island of Puerto Rico and a number of smaller ones, such as Mona, Culebra, and Vieques. The capital and most populous city is San Juan. Its official languages are Spanish and English, though Spanish predominates. The island's population is approximately 3.4 million. Puerto Rico's history, tropical climate, natural scenery, traditional cuisine, and tax incentives make it a destination for travelers from around the world. Originally populated by the indigenous Taíno people, the island was claimed in 1493 by Christopher Columbus for Spain during his second voyage. Later it endured invasion attempts from the French, Dutch, and British. Four centuries of Spanish colonial government influenced the island's cultural landscapes with waves of African slaves, Canarian, and Andalusian settlers. In the Spanish Empire, Puerto Rico played a secondary, but strategic role when compared to wealthier colonies like Peru and the mainland parts of New Spain. Spain's distant administrative control continued up to the end of the 19th century, helping to produce a distinctive creole Hispanic culture and language that combined elements from the Native Americans, Africans, and Iberians. In 1898, following the Spanish–American War, the United States acquired Puerto Rico under the terms of the Treaty of Paris. The treaty took effect on April 11, 1899. Puerto Ricans are by law citizens of the United States and may move freely between the island and the mainland. As it is not a state, Puerto Rico does not have a vote in the United States Congress, which governs the territory with full jurisdiction under the Puerto Rico Federal Relations Act of 1950. However, Puerto Rico does have one non-voting member of the House called a Resident Commissioner. As a U.S. territory, American citizens residing in Puerto Rico are disenfranchised at the national level and do not vote for president and vice president of the United States, and do not pay federal income tax on Puerto Rican income. Like other territories and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico does not have U.S. senators.

Congress approved a local constitution in 1952, allowing U.S. citizens on the territory to elect a governor. A 2012 referendum showed a majority (54% of those who voted) disagreed with "the present form of territorial status". A second question asking about a new model, had full statehood the preferred option among those who voted for a change of status, although a significant number of people did not answer the second question of the referendum. Another fifth referendum was held on June 11, 2017, with "Statehood" and "Independence/Free Association" initially as the only available choices. At the recommendation of the Department of Justice, an option for the "current territorial status" was added. The referendum showed an overwhelming support for statehood, with 97.18% voting for it, although the voter turnout had a historically low figure of only 22.99% of the registered voters casting their ballots. In early 2017, the Puerto Rican government-debt crisis posed serious problems for the government. The outstanding bond debt had climbed to \$70 billion at a time with 12.4% unemployment. The debt had been increasing during a decade long recession. This was the second major financial crisis to affect the island after the Great Depression when the U.S. government, in 1935, provided relief efforts through the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration. On May 3, 2017, Puerto Rico's financial oversight board in the U.S. District Court for Puerto Rico filed the debt restructuring petition which was made under Title III of PROMESA. By early August 2017, the debt was \$72 billion with a 45% poverty rate. In late September 2017, the Category 5 Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico causing devastating damage. The island's electrical grid was largely destroyed, with repairs expected to take months to complete, provoking the largest power outage in American history. Recovery efforts were somewhat slow in the first few months, and over 200,000 residents had moved to Florida alone by late November 2017.

== Etymology == Puerto Rico means "rich port" in Spanish. Puerto Ricans often call the island Borinquén – a derivation of Borikén, its indigenous Taíno name, which means "Land of the Valiant Lord". The terms boricua and borincano derive from Borikén and Borinquen respectively, and are commonly used to identify someone of Puerto Rican heritage. The island is also popularly known in Spanish as la isla del encanto, meaning "the island of enchantment". Columbus named the island San Juan Bautista, in honor of Saint John the Baptist, while the capital city was named Ciudad de Puerto Rico ("Rich Port City"). Eventually traders and other maritime visitors came to refer to the entire island as Puerto Rico, while San Juan became the name used for the main trading/shipping port and the capital city. The island's name was changed to "Porto Rico" by the United States after the Treaty of Paris of 1898. The anglicized name was used by the U.S. government and private enterprises. The name was changed back to Puerto Rico by a joint resolution in Congress introduced by Félix Córdova Dávila in 1931. The official name of the entity in Spanish is Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico ("free associated state of Puerto Rico"), while its official English name is Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

== History ==

=== Pre-Columbian era === The ancient history of the archipelago which is now Puerto Rico is not well known. Unlike other indigenous cultures in the New World (Aztec, Maya and Inca) which left behind abundant archeological and physical evidence of their societies, scant artifacts and evidence remain of the Puerto Rico's indigenous population. Scarce archaeological findings and early Spanish accounts from the colonial era constitute all that is known about them. The first comprehensive book on the history of Puerto Rico was written by Fray Íñigo Abbad y Lasierra in 1786, nearly three centuries after the first Spaniards landed on the island. The first known settlers were the Ortoiroid people, an Archaic Period culture of Amerindian hunters and fishermen who migrated from the South American mainland. Some scholars suggest their settlement dates back about 4,000 years. An archeological dig in 1990 on the island of Vieques found the remains of a man, designated as the "Puerto Ferro Man", which was dated to around 2000 BC. The Ortoiroid were displaced by the Saladoid, a culture from the same region that arrived on the island between 430 and 250 BC. The Igneri tribe migrated to Puerto Rico between 120 and 400 AD from the region of the Orinoco river in northern South America. The Arcaico and Igneri co-existed on the island between the 4th and 10th centuries. Between the 7th and 11th centuries, the Taíno culture developed on the island. By approximately 1000 AD, it had become dominant. At the time of Columbus' arrival, an estimated 30,000 to 60,000 Taíno Amerindians, led by the cacique (chief) Agüeybaná, inhabited the island. They called it Borikén, meaning "the great land of the valiant and noble Lord". The natives lived in small villages, each led by a cacique. They subsisted by hunting and fishing, done generally by men, as well as by the women's gathering and processing of indigenous cassava root and fruit. This lasted until Columbus arrived in 1493.

=== Spanish colony (1493–1898) ===

==== Conquest and early settlement ==== When Columbus arrived in Puerto Rico during his second voyage on November 19, 1493, the island was inhabited by the Taíno. They called it Borikén (Borinquen in Spanish transliteration). Columbus named the island San Juan Bautista, in honor of St John the Baptist. Having reported the findings of his first travel, Columbus brought with him this time a

letter from King Ferdinand empowered by a papal bull that authorized any course of action necessary for the expansion of the Spanish Empire and the Christian faith. Juan Ponce de León, a lieutenant under Columbus, founded the first Spanish settlement, Caparra, on August 8, 1508. He later served as the first governor of the island. Eventually, traders and other maritime visitors came to refer to the entire island as Puerto Rico, and San Juan became the name of the main trading/shipping port. At the beginning of the 16th century, the Spanish people began to colonize the island. Despite the Laws of Burgos of 1512 and other decrees for the protection of the indigenous population, some Taíno Indians were forced into an encomienda system of forced labor in the early years of colonization. The population suffered extremely high fatalities from epidemics of European infectious diseases. ===== Colonization, the Habsburgs ===== In 1520, King Charles I of Spain issued a royal decree collectively emancipating the remaining Taíno population. By that time, the Taíno people were few in number. Enslaved Africans had already begun to be imported to compensate for the native labor loss, but their numbers were proportionate to the diminished commercial interest Spain soon began to demonstrate for the island colony. Other nearby islands, like Cuba, Saint-Domingue, and Guadeloupe, attracted more of the slave trade than Puerto Rico, probably because of greater agricultural interests in those islands, on which colonists had developed large sugar plantations and had the capital to invest in the Atlantic slave trade. From the beginning of the country, the colonial administration relied heavily on the industry of enslaved Africans and creole blacks for public works and defenses, primarily in coastal ports and cities, where the tiny colonial population had hunkered down. With no significant industries or large-scale agricultural production as yet, enslaved and free communities lodged around the few littoral settlements, particularly around San Juan, also forming lasting Afro-creole communities. Meanwhile, in the island's interior, there developed a mixed and independent peasantry that relied on a subsistence economy. This mostly unsupervised population supplied villages and settlements with foodstuffs and, in relative isolation, set the pattern for what later would be known as the Puerto Rican Jíbaro culture. By the end of the 16th century, the Spanish Empire was diminishing and, in the face of increasing raids from European competitors, the colonial administration throughout the Americas fell into a "bunker mentality". Imperial strategists and urban planners redesigned port settlements into military posts with the objective of protecting Spanish territorial claims and ensuring the safe passing of the king's silver-laden Atlantic Fleet to the Iberian Peninsula. San Juan served as an important port-of-call for ships driven across the Atlantic by its powerful trade winds. West Indies convoys linked Spain to the island, sailing between Cádiz and the Spanish West Indies. The colony's seat of government was on the forested Islet of San Juan and for a time became one of the most heavily fortified settlements in the Spanish Caribbean earning the name of the "Walled City". The islet is still dotted with the various forts and walls, such as La Fortaleza, Castillo San Felipe del Morro, and Castillo San Cristóbal, designed to protect the population and the strategic Port of San Juan from the raids of the Spanish European competitors. In 1625, in the Battle of San Juan, the Dutch commander Boudewijn Hendricksz tested the defenses' limits like no one else before. Learning from Francis Drake's previous failures here, he circumvented the cannons of the castle of San Felipe del Morro and quickly brought his 17 ships into the San Juan Bay. He then occupied the port and attacked the city while the population hurried for shelter behind the Morro's moat and high battlements. Historians consider this event the worst attack on San Juan. Though the Dutch set the village on fire, they failed to conquer the Morro, and its batteries pounded their troops and ships until Hendricksz deemed the cause lost. Hendricksz's expedition eventually helped propel a fortification frenzy. Constructions of defenses for the San Cristóbal Hill were soon ordered so as to prevent the landing of invaders out of reach of the Morro's artillery. Urban planning responded to the needs of keeping the colony in Spanish hands. ===== Late colonial period ===== During the late 16th and early 17th centuries, Spain concentrated its colonial efforts on the more prosperous mainland North, Central, and South American colonies. With the advent of the lively Bourbon Dynasty in Spain in the 1700s, the island of Puerto Rico began a gradual shift to more imperial attention. More roads began connecting previously isolated inland settlements to coastal cities, and coastal settlements like Arecibo, Mayaguez, and Ponce began acquiring importance of their own, separate from San Juan. By the end of the 18th century, merchant ships from an array of nationalities threatened the tight regulations of the Mercantilist system, which turned each colony solely toward the European metropole and limited contact with other nations. U.S. ships came to surpass Spanish trade and with this also came the exploitation of the island's natural resources. Slavers, which had made but few stops on the island before, began selling more enslaved Africans to growing sugar and coffee plantations. The increasing number of Atlantic wars in which the Caribbean islands played major roles, like the War of Jenkins' Ear, the Seven Years' War and the Atlantic Revolutions, ensured

Puerto Rico's growing esteem in Madrid's eyes. On April 17, 1797, Sir Ralph Abercromby's fleet invaded the island with a force of 6,000–13,000 men, which included German soldiers and Royal Marines and 60 to 64 ships. Fierce fighting continued for the next days with Spanish troops. Both sides suffered heavy losses. On Sunday April 30 the British ceased their attack and began their retreat from San Juan. By the time independence movements in the larger Spanish colonies gained success, new waves of loyal creole immigrants began to arrive in Puerto Rico, helping to tilt the island's political balance toward the Crown. In 1809, to secure its political bond with the island and in the midst of the European Peninsular War, the Supreme Central Junta based in Cádiz recognized Puerto Rico as an overseas province of Spain. This gave the island residents the right to elect representatives to the recently convened Spanish parliament (Cádiz Cortes), with equal representation to mainland Iberian, Mediterranean (Balearic Islands) and Atlantic maritime Spanish provinces (Canary Islands). Ramón Power y Giralt, the first Spanish parliamentary representative from the island of Puerto Rico, died after serving a three-year term in the Cortes. These parliamentary and constitutional reforms were in force from 1810 to 1814, and again from 1820 to 1823. They were twice reversed during the restoration of the traditional monarchy by Ferdinand VII. Immigration and commercial trade reforms in the 19th century increased the island's ethnic European population and economy and expanded the Spanish cultural and social imprint on the local character of the island. Minor slave revolts had occurred on the island throughout the years, with the revolt planned and organized by Marcos Xiorro in 1821 being the most important. Even though the conspiracy was unsuccessful, Xiorro achieved legendary status and is part of Puerto Rico's folklore. ===== Politics of liberalism ===== In the early 19th century, Puerto Rico spawned an independence movement that, due to harsh persecution by the Spanish authorities, convened in the island of St. Thomas. The movement was largely inspired by the ideals of Simón Bolívar in establishing a United Provinces of New Granada and Venezuela, that included Puerto Rico and Cuba. Among the influential members of this movement were Brigadier General Antonio Valero de Bernabé and María de las Mercedes Barbudo. The movement was discovered, and Governor Miguel de la Torre had its members imprisoned or exiled. With the increasingly rapid growth of independent former Spanish colonies in the South and Central American states in the first part of the 19th century, the Spanish Crown considered Puerto Rico and Cuba of strategic importance. To increase its hold on its last two New World colonies, the Spanish Crown revived the Royal Decree of Graces of 1815 as a result of which 450,000 immigrants, mainly Spaniards, settled on the island in the period up until the American conquest. Printed in three languages—Spanish, English, and French—it was intended to also attract non-Spanish Europeans, with the hope that the independence movements would lose their popularity if new settlers had stronger ties to the Crown. Hundreds of non Spanish families, mainly from Corsica, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Scotland, also immigrated to the island. Free land was offered as an incentive to those who wanted to populate the two islands, on the condition that they swear their loyalty to the Spanish Crown and allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church. The offer was very successful, and European immigration continued even after 1898. Puerto Rico still receives Spanish and European immigration. Poverty and political estrangement with Spain led to a small but significant uprising in 1868 known as Grito de Lares. It began in the rural town of Lares, but was subdued when rebels moved to the neighboring town of San Sebastián. Leaders of this independence movement included Ramón Emeterio Betances, considered the "father" of the Puerto Rican independence movement, and other political figures such as Segundo Ruiz Belvis. Slavery was abolished in Puerto Rico in 1873, "with provisions for periods of apprenticeship". Leaders of "El Grito de Lares" went into exile in New York City. Many joined the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Committee, founded on December 8, 1895, and continued their quest for Puerto Rican independence. In 1897, Antonio Mattei Lluberas and the local leaders of the independence movement in Yauco organized another uprising, which became known as the Intentona de Yauco. They raised what they called the Puerto Rican flag, which was adopted as the national flag. The local conservative political factions opposed independence. Rumors of the planned event spread to the local Spanish authorities who acted swiftly and put an end to what would be the last major uprising in the island to Spanish colonial rule. In 1897, Luis Muñoz Rivera and others persuaded the liberal Spanish government to agree to grant limited self-government to the island by royal decree in the Autonomic Charter, including a bicameral legislature. In 1898, Puerto Rico's first, but short-lived, quasi-autonomous government was organized as an "overseas province" of Spain. This bilaterally agreed-upon charter maintained a governor appointed by the King of Spain – who held the power to annul any legislative decision – and a partially elected parliamentary structure. In February, Governor-General Manuel Macías inaugurated the new government under the Autonomic Charter. General elections were held in March and the new

government began to function on July 17, 1898. === American era (1898–present) === In 1890, Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, a member of the Navy War Board and leading U.S. strategic thinker, published a book titled *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* in which he argued for the establishment of a large and powerful navy modeled after the British Royal Navy. Part of his strategy called for the acquisition of colonies in the Caribbean, which would serve as coaling and naval stations. They would serve as strategic points of defense with the construction of a canal through the Isthmus of Panama, to allow easier passage of ships between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. William H. Seward, the former Secretary of State under presidents Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson, had also stressed the importance of building a canal in Honduras, Nicaragua or Panama. He suggested that the United States annex the Dominican Republic and purchase Puerto Rico and Cuba. The U.S. Senate did not approve his annexation proposal, and Spain rejected the U.S. offer of 160 million dollars for Puerto Rico and Cuba. Since 1894, the United States Naval War College had been developing contingency plans for a war with Spain. By 1896, the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence had prepared a plan that included military operations in Puerto Rican waters. Except for one 1895 plan, which recommended annexation of the island then named Isle of Pines (later renamed as Isla de la Juventud), a recommendation dropped in later planning, plans developed for attacks on Spanish territories were intended as support operations against Spain's forces in and around Cuba. Recent research suggests that the U.S. did consider Puerto Rico valuable as a naval station, and recognized that it and Cuba generated lucrative crops of sugar – a valuable commercial commodity which the United States lacked, before the development of the sugar beet industry in the United States. On July 25, 1898, during the Spanish–American War, the U.S. invaded Puerto Rico with a landing at Guánica. As an outcome of the war, Spain ceded Puerto Rico, along with the Philippines and Guam, then under Spanish sovereignty, to the U.S. under the Treaty of Paris, which went into effect on April 11, 1899. Spain relinquished sovereignty over Cuba, but did not cede it to the U.S. ===== United States unincorporated organized territory (1900–1952) ===== The United States and Puerto Rico began a long-standing metropolis-colony relationship. In the early 20th century, Puerto Rico was ruled by the military, with officials including the governor appointed by the President of the United States. The Foraker Act of 1900 gave Puerto Rico a certain amount of civilian popular government, including a popularly elected House of Representatives. The upper house and governor were appointed by the United States. Its judicial system was constructed to follow the American legal system; a Puerto Rico Supreme Court and a United State District Court for the territory were established. It was authorized a non-voting member of Congress, by the title of "Resident Commissioner", who was appointed. In addition, this Act extended all U.S. laws "not locally inapplicable" to Puerto Rico, specifying, in particular, exemption from U.S. Internal Revenue laws. The Act empowered the civil government to legislate on "all matters of legislative character not locally inapplicable", including the power to modify and repeal any laws then in existence in Puerto Rico, though the U.S. Congress retained the power to annul acts of the Puerto Rico legislature. During an address to the Puerto Rican legislature in 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt recommended that Puerto Ricans become U.S. citizens. In 1914, the Puerto Rican House of Delegates voted unanimously in favor of independence from the United States, but this was rejected by the U.S. Congress as "unconstitutional", and in violation of the 1900 Foraker Act. ===== U.S. citizenship and Puerto Rican citizenship ===== In 1917, the U.S. Congress passed the Jones–Shafroth Act, popularly called the Jones Act, which granted Puerto Ricans, born on or after, April 25, 1898, U.S. citizenship. Opponents, which included all of the Puerto Rican House of Delegates, who voted unanimously against it, said that the U.S. imposed citizenship in order to draft Puerto Rican men into the army as American entry into World War I became likely. The same Act provided for a popularly elected Senate to complete a bicameral Legislative Assembly, as well as a bill of rights. It authorized the popular election of the Resident Commissioner to a four-year term. Natural disasters, including a major earthquake and tsunami in 1918, and several hurricanes, and the Great Depression impoverished the island during the first few decades under U.S. rule. Some political leaders, such as Pedro Albizu Campos, who led the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, demanded change in relations with the United States. He organized a protest at the University of Puerto Rico in 1935, in which four were killed by police. In 1936, U.S. Senator Millard Tydings introduced a bill supporting independence for Puerto Rico, but it was opposed by Luis Muñoz Marín of the Liberal Party of Puerto Rico. (Tydings had co-sponsored the Tydings–McDuffie Act, which provided independence to the Philippines after a 10-year transition under a limited autonomy.) All the Puerto Rican parties supported the bill, but Muñoz Marín opposed it. Tydings did not gain passage of the bill. In 1937, Albizu Campos' party organized a protest in which numerous people were killed by police in Ponce. The Insular Police, resembling the

National Guard, opened fire upon unarmed cadets and bystanders alike. The attack on unarmed protesters was reported by the U.S. Congressman Vito Marcantonio and confirmed by the report of the Hays Commission, which investigated the events. The commission was led by Arthur Garfield Hays, counsel to the American Civil Liberties Union. Nineteen people were killed and over 200 were badly wounded, many in their backs while running away. The Hays Commission declared it a massacre and police mob action, and it has since been known as the Ponce massacre. In the aftermath, on April 2, 1943, Tydings introduced a bill in Congress calling for independence for Puerto Rico. This bill ultimately was defeated. During the latter years of the Roosevelt–Truman administrations, the internal governance was changed in a compromise reached with Luis Muñoz Marín and other Puerto Rican leaders. In 1946, President Truman appointed the first Puerto Rican-born governor, Jesús T. Piñero. Since 2007, the Puerto Rico State Department has developed a protocol to issue certificates of Puerto Rican citizenship to Puerto Ricans. In order to be eligible, applicants must have been born in Puerto Rico; born outside of Puerto Rico to a Puerto Rican–born parent; or be an American citizen with at least one year of residence in Puerto Rico. ===== United States unincorporated organized territory with commonwealth constitution (1952–present) ===== In 1947, the U.S. granted Puerto Ricans the right to democratically elect their own governor. In 1948, Luis Muñoz Marín became the first popularly elected governor of Puerto Rico. A bill was introduced before the Puerto Rican Senate which would restrain the rights of the independence and nationalist movements in the island. The Senate at the time was controlled by the Popular Democratic Party (PPD), and was presided over by Luis Muñoz Marín. The bill, also known as the Gag Law (Spanish: Ley de la Mordaza), was approved by the legislature on May 21, 1948. It made it illegal to display a Puerto Rican flag, to sing a pro-independence tune, to talk of independence, or to campaign for independence. The bill, which resembled the Smith Act passed in the United States, was signed and made into law on June 10, 1948, by the U.S. appointed governor of Puerto Rico, Jesús T. Piñero, and became known as "Law 53" (Spanish: Ley 53). In accordance with this law, it would be a crime to print, publish, sell, exhibit, organize or help anyone organize any society, group or assembly of people whose intentions are to paralyze or destroy the insular government. Anyone accused and found guilty of disobeying the law could be sentenced to ten years of prison, be fined \$10,000 (U.S.), or both. According to Dr. Leopoldo Figueroa, a member of the Puerto Rico House of Representatives, the law was repressive and in violation of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees Freedom of Speech. He asserted that the law as such was a violation of the civil rights of the people of Puerto Rico. The law was repealed in 1957. ===== Estado Libre Asociado ===== In 1950, the U.S. Congress granted Puerto Ricans the right to organize a constitutional convention via a referendum that gave them the option of voting their preference, "yes" or "no", on a proposed U.S. law that would organize Puerto Rico as a "commonwealth" that would continue United States sovereignty over Puerto Rico and its people. Puerto Rico's electorate expressed its support for this measure in 1951 with a second referendum to ratify the constitution. The Constitution of Puerto Rico was formally adopted on July 3, 1952. The Constitutional Convention specified the name by which the body politic would be known. On February 4, 1952, the convention approved Resolution 22 which chose in English the word Commonwealth, meaning a "politically organized community" or "state", which is simultaneously connected by a compact or treaty to another political system. Puerto Rico officially designates itself with the term "Commonwealth of Puerto Rico" in its constitution, as a translation into English of the term to "Estado Libre Asociado" (ELA). In 1967 Puerto Rico's Legislative Assembly polled the political preferences of the Puerto Rican electorate by passing a plebiscite act that provided for a vote on the status of Puerto Rico. This constituted the first plebiscite by the Legislature for a choice among three status options (commonwealth, statehood, and independence). In subsequent plebiscites organized by Puerto Rico held in 1993 and 1998 (without any formal commitment on the part of the U.S. Government to honor the results), the current political status failed to receive majority support. In 1993, Commonwealth status won by a plurality of votes (48.6% versus 46.3% for statehood), while the "none of the above" option, which was the Popular Democratic Party-sponsored choice, won in 1998 with 50.3% of the votes (versus 46.5% for statehood). Disputes arose as to the definition of each of the ballot alternatives, and Commonwealth advocates, among others, reportedly urged a vote for "none of the above". In 1950, the U.S. Congress approved Public Law 600 (P.L. 81-600), which allowed for a democratic referendum in Puerto Rico to determine whether Puerto Ricans desired to draft their own local constitution. This Act was meant to be adopted in the "nature of a compact". It required congressional approval of the Puerto Rico Constitution before it could go into effect, and repealed certain sections of the Organic Act of 1917. The sections of this statute left in force were entitled the Puerto Rican Federal Relations Act. U.S. Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman,

under whose Department resided responsibility of Puerto Rican affairs, clarified the new commonwealth status in this manner: On October 30, 1950, Pedro Albizu Campos and other nationalists led a three-day revolt against the United States in various cities and towns of Puerto Rico, in what is known as the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party Revolts of the 1950s. The most notable occurred in Jayuya and Utuado. In the Jayuya revolt, known as the Jayuya Uprising, the Puerto Rican governor declared martial law, and attacked the insurgents in Jayuya with infantry, artillery and bombers under control of the Puerto Rican commander. The Utuado uprising culminated in what is known as the Utuado massacre. On November 1, 1950, Puerto Rican nationalists from New York City, Griselio Torresola and Oscar Collazo, attempted to assassinate President Harry S. Truman at his temporary residence of Blair House. Torresola was killed during the attack, but Collazo was wounded and captured. He was convicted of murder and sentenced to death, but President Truman commuted his sentence to life. After Collazo served 29 years in a federal prison, President Jimmy Carter commuted his sentence to time served and he was released in 1979. Pedro Albizu Campos served many years in a federal prison in Atlanta, for seditious conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. government in Puerto Rico. The Constitution of Puerto Rico was approved by a Constitutional Convention on February 6, 1952, and 82% of the voters in a March referendum. It was modified and ratified by the U.S. Congress, approved by President Truman on July 3 of that year, and proclaimed by Gov. Muñoz Marín on July 25, 1952. This was the anniversary of July 25, 1898, landing of U.S. troops in the Puerto Rican Campaign of the Spanish–American War, until then celebrated as an annual Puerto Rico holiday. Puerto Rico adopted the name of Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico (literally "Associated Free State of Puerto Rico"), officially translated into English as Commonwealth, for its body politic. "The United States Congress legislates over many fundamental aspects of Puerto Rican life, including citizenship, the currency, the postal service, foreign policy, military defense, communications, labor relations, the environment, commerce, finance, health and welfare, and many others." During the 1950s and 1960s, Puerto Rico experienced rapid industrialization, due in large part to Operación Manos a la Obra ("Operation Bootstrap"), an offshoot of FDR's New Deal. It was intended to transform Puerto Rico's economy from agriculture-based to manufacturing-based to provide more jobs. Puerto Rico has become a major tourist destination, as well as a global center for pharmaceutical manufacturing. === Referendums on statehood or independence === Four referendums have been held since the late 20th century to resolve the political status. The 2012 referendum showed a majority (54% of the voters) in favor of a change in status, with full statehood the preferred option of those who wanted a change. Because there were almost 500,000 blank ballots in the 2012 referendum, creating confusion as to the voters' true desire, Congress decided to ignore the vote. The first three plebiscites provided voters with three options: statehood, free association, and independence. The Puerto Rican status referendum, 2017 in June 2017 was going to offer only two options: Statehood and Independence/Free Association. However, a letter from the Donald Trump administration recommended adding the Commonwealth, the current status, in the plebiscite. The option had been removed from this plebiscite in response to the results of the plebiscite in 2012 which asked whether to remain in the current status and No had won. The Trump administration cited changes in demographics during the past 5 years to add the option once again. Amendments to the plebiscite bill were adopted making ballot wording changes requested by the Department of Justice, as well as adding a "current territorial status" option. While 97 percent voted in favor of statehood, the turnout was low; only some 23 percent voted. After the ballots were counted the Justice Department was non-committal. The Justice Department had asked for the 2017 plebiscite to be postponed but the Rosselló government chose not to do so. After the outcome was announced, the department told the Associated Press that it had "not reviewed or approved the ballot's language". Former Governor Aníbal Acevedo Vilá (2005–2009) is convinced that statehood is not the solution for either the U.S. or for Puerto Rico "for economic, identity and cultural reasons". He pointed out that voter turnout for the 2017 referendum was extremely low, and suggests that a different type of mutually-beneficial relationship should be found. If the federal government agrees to discuss an association agreement, the conditions would be negotiated between the two entities. The agreement might cover topics such as the role of the U.S. military in Puerto Rico, the use of the U.S. currency, free trade between the two entities, and whether Puerto Ricans would be U.S. citizens. The three current Free Associated States (Marshall Islands, Micronesia and Palau) use the American dollar, receive some financial support and the promise of military defense if they refuse military access to any other country. Their citizens are allowed to work in the U.S. and serve in its military. Governor Ricardo Rosselló is strongly in favor of statehood to help develop the economy and help to "solve our 500-year-old colonial dilemma ... Colonialism is not an option .... It's a civil rights issue ... 3.5 million

citizens seeking an absolute democracy," he told the news media. Benefits of statehood include an additional \$10 billion per year in federal funds, the right to vote in presidential elections, higher Social Security and Medicare benefits, and a right for its government agencies and municipalities to file for bankruptcy. The latter is currently prohibited. Statehood might be useful as a means of dealing with the financial crisis, since it would allow for bankruptcy and the relevant protection. According to the Government Development Bank, this might be the only solution to the debt crisis. Congress has the power to vote to allow Chapter 9 protection without the need for statehood, but in late 2015 there was very little support in the House for this concept. Other benefits to statehood include increased disability benefits and Medicaid funding, the right to vote in Presidential elections and the higher (federal) minimum wage. Subsequent to the 2017 referendum, Puerto Rico's legislators are also expected to vote on a bill that would allow the Governor to draft a state constitution and hold elections to choose senators and representatives to the federal Congress. In spite of the outcome of the referendum, and the so-called Tennessee Plan (above), action by the United States Congress would be necessary to implement changes to the status of Puerto Rico under the Territorial Clause of the United States Constitution. === United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization === Since 1953, the UN has been considering the political status of Puerto Rico and how to assist it in achieving "independence" or "decolonization". In 1978, the Special Committee determined that a "colonial relationship" existed between the U.S. and Puerto Rico. The UN's Special Committee on Decolonization has often referred to Puerto Rico as a "nation" in its reports, because, internationally, the people of Puerto Rico are often considered to be a Caribbean nation with their own national identity. Most recently, in a June 2016 report, the Special Committee called for the United States to expedite the process to allow self-determination in Puerto Rico. More specifically, the group called on the United States to expedite a process that would allow the people of Puerto Rico to exercise fully their right to self-determination and independence. ... allow the Puerto Rican people to take decisions in a sovereign manner, and to address their urgent economic and social needs, including unemployment, marginalization, insolvency and poverty". ===== International status ===== On November 27, 1953, shortly after the establishment of the Commonwealth, the General Assembly of the United Nations approved Resolution 748, removing Puerto Rico's classification as a non-self-governing territory. The General Assembly did not apply the full list of criteria which was enunciated in 1960 when it took favorable note of the cessation of transmission of information regarding the non-self-governing status of Puerto Rico. According to the White House Task Force on Puerto Rico's Political Status in its December 21, 2007 report, the U.S., in its written submission to the UN in 1953, never represented that Congress could not change its relationship with Puerto Rico without the territory's consent. It stated that the U.S. Justice Department in 1959 reiterated that Congress held power over Puerto Rico pursuant to the Territorial Clause of the U.S. Constitution. In 1993 the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit stated that Congress may unilaterally repeal the Puerto Rican Constitution or the Puerto Rican Federal Relations Act and replace them with any rules or regulations of its choice. In a 1996 report on a Puerto Rico status political bill, the U.S. House Committee on Resources stated, "Puerto Rico's current status does not meet the criteria for any of the options for full self-government under Resolution 1541" (the three established forms of full self-government being stated in the report as (1) national independence, (2) free association based on separate sovereignty, or (3) full integration with another nation on the basis of equality). The report concluded that Puerto Rico "... remains an unincorporated colony and does not have the status of 'free association' with the United States as that status is defined under United States law or international practice", that the establishment of local self-government with the consent of the people can be unilaterally revoked by the U.S. Congress, and that U.S. Congress can also withdraw the U.S. citizenship of Puerto Rican residents of Puerto Rico at any time, for a legitimate Federal purpose. The application of the U.S. Constitution to Puerto Rico is limited by the Insular Cases. In 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, and 2011 the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization passed resolutions calling on the United States to expedite a process "that would allow Puerto Ricans to fully exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence", and to release all Puerto Rican political prisoners in U.S. prisons, to clean up, decontaminate and return the lands in the islands of Vieques and Culebra to the people of Puerto Rico, to perform a probe into U.S. human rights violations on the island and a probe into the killing by the FBI of pro-independence leader Filiberto Ojeda Rios. === 21st century === On July 15, 2009, the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization approved a draft resolution calling on the Government of the United States to expedite a process that would allow the Puerto Rican people to exercise fully their inalienable right to self-determination and independence. On April 29, 2010, the U.S. House voted 223–169 to approve a measure for a federally sanctioned



process for Puerto Rico's self-determination, allowing Puerto Rico to set a new referendum on whether to continue its present form of commonwealth, or to have a different political status. If Puerto Ricans voted to continue as a commonwealth, the Government of Puerto Rico was authorized to conduct additional plebiscites at intervals of every eight years from the date on which the results of the prior plebiscite were certified; if Puerto Ricans voted to have a different political status, a second referendum would determine whether Puerto Rico would become a U.S. state, an independent country, or a sovereign nation associated with the U.S. that would not be subject to the Territorial Clause of the United States Constitution. During the House debate, a fourth option, to retain its present form of commonwealth (sometimes referred to as "the status quo") political status, was added as an option in the second plebiscite. Immediately following U.S. House passage, H.R. 2499 was sent to the U.S. Senate, where it was given two formal readings and referred to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. On December 22, 2010, the 111th United States Congress adjourned without any Senate vote on H.R.2499, killing the bill. The latest Task Force report was released on March 11, 2011. The report suggested a two-plebiscite process, including a "first plebiscite that requires the people of Puerto Rico to choose whether they wish to be part of the United States (either via Statehood or Commonwealth) or wish to be independent (via Independence or Free Association). If continuing to be part of the United States were chosen in the first plebiscite, a second vote would be taken between Statehood and Commonwealth." On June 14, 2011, President Barack Obama "promised to support 'a clear decision' by the people of Puerto Rico on statehood". That same month, the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization passed a resolution and adopted a consensus text introduced by Cuba's delegate on June 20, 2011, calling on the United States to expedite a process "that would allow Puerto Ricans to fully exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence". On November 6, 2012, a two-question referendum took place, simultaneous with the general elections. The first question asked voters whether they wanted to maintain the current status under the territorial clause of the U.S. Constitution. The second question posed three alternate status options if the first question was approved: statehood, independence or free association. For the first question, 54 percent voted against the current Commonwealth status. For the second question, 61.16% voted for statehood, 33.34% for a sovereign free associated state, and 5.49% for independence. There were also 515,348 blank and invalidated ballots, which are not reflected in the final tally, as they are not considered cast votes under Puerto Rico law. On December 11, 2012, Puerto Rico's Legislature passed a concurrent resolution to request to the President and the U.S. Congress action on November 6, 2012 plebiscite results. But on April 10, 2013, with the issue still being widely debated, the White House announced that it will seek \$2.5 million to hold another referendum, this next one being the first Puerto Rican status referendum to be financed by the U.S. Federal government. In December 2015, the U.S. Government submitted a brief as Amicus Curiae to the U.S. Supreme Court related to the case Commonwealth of Puerto Rico v. Sanchez Valle. The U.S. Government official position is that the U.S. Constitution does not contemplate "sovereign territories". That the Court has consistently recognized that "there is no sovereignty in a Territory of the United States but that of the United States itself". and a U.S. territory has "no independent sovereignty comparable to that of a state. That is because "the Government of a territory owes its existence wholly to the United States". Congress's plenary authority over federal territories includes the authority to permit self-government, whereby local officials administer a territory's internal affairs. On June 9, 2016, in Commonwealth of Puerto Rico vs Sanchez Valle, a 6–2 majority of the Supreme Court of the United States determined that Puerto Rico is a territory and lacks Sovereignty. On June 30, 2016, the President of the United States of America signed a new law approved by U.S. Congress, H.R. 5278: PROMESA, establishing a Control Board over the Puerto Rico Government. This board will have a significant degree of federal control involved in its establishment and operations. In particular, the authority to establish the control board derives from the federal government's constitutional power to "make all needful rules and regulations" regarding U.S. territories; The President would appoint all seven voting members of the board; and the board would have broad sovereign powers to effectively overrule decisions by Puerto Rico's legislature, governor, and other public authorities. === Political status === The latest referendum on statehood, independence, or an associated republic was held on November 6, 2012. The people of Puerto Rico made history by requesting, for the first time ever, the conclusion of the island's current territorial status. Almost 78% of registered voters participated in a plebiscite held to resolve Puerto Rico's status, and a slim but clear majority (54%) disagreed with Puerto Rico maintaining its present territorial status. Furthermore, among the possible alternatives, sixty-one percent (61%) of voters chose the statehood option, while one third of the ballots were submitted blank. On December 11, 2012, the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico

enacted a concurrent resolution requesting the President and the Congress of the United States to respond to the referendum of the people of Puerto Rico, held on November 6, 2012, to end its current form of territorial status and to begin the process to admit Puerto Rico as a State. The initiative has not made Puerto Rico into a state. === Hurricane Maria === In late September 2017, Hurricane Maria hit the island as a Category 4 storm causing severe damage to homes, other buildings and infrastructure. The recovery as of late November was slow but progress had been made. Electricity was restored to two-thirds of the island, although there was some doubt as to the number of residents getting reliable power. In January 2018, it was reported that close to 40 percent of the island's customers still did not have electricity. The vast majority had access to water but were still required to boil it. The number still living in shelters had dropped to 982 with thousands of others living with relatives. The official death toll at the time was 58 but some sources indicated that the actual number is much higher. A dam on the island was close to failure and officials were concerned about additional flooding from this source. Thousands had left Puerto Rico, with close to 200,000 having arrived in Florida alone. Those who were then living on the mainland experienced difficulty in getting health care benefits. A New York Times report on November 27 said it was understandable that Puerto Ricans wanted to leave the island. "Basic essentials are hard to find and electricity and other utilities are unreliable or entirely inaccessible. Much of the population has been unable to return to jobs or to school and access to health care has been severely limited." The Center for Puerto Rican Studies at New York's Hunter College estimated that some half million people, about 14% of the population, may permanently leave by 2019. The total damage on the island was estimated as up to \$95 billion. By the end of November, FEMA had received over a million applications for aid and had approved about a quarter of those. The US government had agreed in October to provide funding to rebuild and up to \$4.9 billion in loans to help the island's government. FEMA had \$464 million earmarked to help local governments rebuild public buildings and infrastructure. Bills for other funding were being considered in Washington but little progress had been made on those. A November 28, 2017 report by the Sierra Club included this comment: "It will take years to rebuild Puerto Rico, not just from the worst hurricane to make landfall since 1932, but to sustainably overcome environmental injustices which made Maria's devastation even more catastrophic". In May, 2017, the Natural Resources Defense Council reported that Puerto Rico's water system was the worst as measured by the Clean Water Act. 70% of the population drank water that violated U.S. law. ===== Rebuilding efforts ===== A tourism web site report in March 2018 indicated that all airports were operating, although Luis Munoz Marin Airport would not be back to handling the full number of flights until July 2018. Some 90% of the island was receiving electricity, although the power structure would require another \$17.6 billion for full rebuilding, according to the United States Department of Energy. Nearly all residents had access to telecommunications service and running water. All hospitals were operating. Some 83% of hotel rooms were available for use and the cruise ship port was receiving ships; 58 arrived in San Juan in February. The island was encouraging operators to increase the number of tourists. Reports in April 2018 stated that Puerto Rico will receive \$18.5 billion from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to help rebuild homes and infrastructure. This was substantially less than the \$46 billion requested by the governor. However, the island was expecting to receive approximately \$50 billion for disaster relief over the subsequent six years mostly via the Federal Emergency Management Agency. At that time, nearly 2800 families were living in FEMA-sponsored short-term housing across 34 states and Puerto Rico. Nearly half of the schools are operating at only 60% classroom capacity. Over 280 public schools would not reopen in the fall; 827 were expected to be operational. Almost 40,000 students left the island's schools since May 2017; some of these were in schools in the mainland U.S. (Before the hurricanes, Puerto Rico had planned to close 179 schools due to inadequate numbers of students.) == Geography == Puerto Rico consists of the main island of Puerto Rico and various smaller islands, including Vieques, Culebra, Mona, Desecheo, and Caja de Muertos. Of these five, only Culebra and Vieques are inhabited year-round. Mona, which has played a key role in maritime history, is uninhabited most of the year except for employees of the Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources. There are many other even smaller islets, like Monito, which is near to Mona, Isla de Cabras and La Isleta de San Juan, both located on the San Juan Bay. The latter is the only inhabited islet with communities like Old San Juan and Puerta de Tierra, and connected to the main island by bridges. The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico has an area of 13,790 square kilometers (5,320 sq mi), of which 8,870 km<sup>2</sup> (3,420 sq mi) is land and 4,921 km<sup>2</sup> (1,900 sq mi) is water. Puerto Rico is larger than two U.S. states, Delaware and Rhode Island. The maximum length of the main island from east to west is 180 km (110 mi), and the maximum width from north to south is 65 km (40 mi). Puerto Rico is the smallest of the Greater Antilles. It is 80%

of the size of Jamaica, just over 18% of the size of Hispaniola and 8% of the size of Cuba, the largest of the Greater Antilles. The island is mostly mountainous with large coastal areas in the north and south. The main mountain range is called "La Cordillera Central" (The Central Range). The highest elevation in Puerto Rico, Cerro de Punta 1,338 meters (4,390 ft), is located in this range. Another important peak is El Yunque, one of the highest in the Sierra de Luquillo at the El Yunque National Forest, with an elevation of 1,065 m (3,494 ft). Puerto Rico has 17 lakes, all man-made, and more than 50 rivers, most originating in the Cordillera Central. Rivers in the northern region of the island are typically longer and of higher water flow rates than those of the south, since the south receives less rain than the central and northern regions. Puerto Rico is composed of Cretaceous to Eocene volcanic and plutonic rocks, overlain by younger Oligocene and more recent carbonates and other sedimentary rocks. Most of the caverns and karst topography on the island occurs in the northern region in the carbonates. The oldest rocks are approximately 190 million years old (Jurassic) and are located at Sierra Bermeja in the southwest part of the island. They may represent part of the oceanic crust and are believed to come from the Pacific Ocean realm. Puerto Rico lies at the boundary between the Caribbean and North American plates and is being deformed by the tectonic stresses caused by their interaction. These stresses may cause earthquakes and tsunamis. These seismic events, along with landslides, represent some of the most dangerous geologic hazards in the island and in the northeastern Caribbean. The most recent major earthquake occurred on October 11, 1918, and had an estimated magnitude of 7.5 on the Richter scale. It originated off the coast of Aguadilla, several kilometers off the northern coast, and was accompanied by a tsunami. It caused extensive property damage and widespread losses, damaging infrastructure, especially bridges. It resulted in an estimated 116 deaths and \$4 million in property damage. The failure of the government to move rapidly to provide for the general welfare contributed to political activism by opponents and eventually to the rise of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party. The Puerto Rico Trench, the largest and deepest trench in the Atlantic, is located about 115 km (71 mi) north of Puerto Rico at the boundary between the Caribbean and North American plates. It is 280 km (170 mi) long. At its deepest point, named the Milwaukee Deep, it is almost 8,400 m (27,600 ft) deep. === Climate === The climate of Puerto Rico in the Köppen climate classification is tropical rainforest. Temperatures are warm to hot year round, averaging near 85 °F (29 °C) in lower elevations and 70 °F (21 °C) in the mountains. Easterly trade winds pass across the island year round. Puerto Rico has a rainy season which stretches from April into November. The mountains of the Cordillera Central are the main cause of the variations in the temperature and rainfall that occur over very short distances. The mountains can also cause wide variation in local wind speed and direction due to their sheltering and channeling effects adding to the climatic variation. The island has an average temperature of 82.4 °F (28 °C) throughout the year, with an average minimum temperature of 66.9 °F (19 °C) and maximum of 85.4 °F (30 °C). Daily temperature changes seasonally are quite small in the lowlands and coastal areas. The temperature in the south is usually a few degrees higher than the north and temperatures in the central interior mountains are always cooler than those on the rest of the island. Between the dry and wet season, there is a temperature change of around 6 °F (3.3 °C). This is mainly due to the warm waters of the tropical Atlantic Ocean, which significantly modify cooler air moving in from the north and northwest. Coastal waters temperatures around the years are about 75 °F (24 °C) in February to 85 °F (29 °C) in August. The highest temperature ever recorded was 99 °F (37 °C) at Arecibo, while the lowest temperature ever recorded was 40 °F (4 °C) in the mountains at Adjuntas, Aibonito, and Corozal. The average yearly precipitation is 1,687 mm (66 in). Puerto Rico experiences the Atlantic hurricane season, similar to the remainder of the Caribbean Sea and North Atlantic oceans. On average, a quarter of its annual rainfall is contributed from tropical cyclones, which are more prevalent during periods of La Niña than El Niño. A cyclone of tropical storm strength passes near Puerto Rico, on average, every five years. A hurricane passes in the vicinity of the island, on average, every seven years. Since 1851, the Lake Okeechobee Hurricane of September 1928 is the only hurricane to make landfall as a Category 5 hurricane. In the busy 2017 Atlantic hurricane season, Puerto Rico avoided a direct hit by the Category 5 Hurricane Irma on September 8, 2017, but high winds caused a loss of electrical power to some one million residents. Almost 50% of hospitals were operating with power provided by generators. The Category 4 Hurricane Jose, as expected, veered away from Puerto Rico. A short time later, the devastating Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico as a Category 4 hurricane, with sustained 155 mph (249 km/h) winds, powerful rains and widespread flooding causing tremendous destruction, including the electrical grid, which could remain out for 4–6 months. With such widespread destruction and a great need for supplies – everything from drinking water, food, medicine and personal care items to fuel for generators and construction materials for

rebuilding the island – Gov. Rossello and several Congressmen called on the federal government to waive the WWI-era Jones Act (protectionist provisions: ships made and owned in U.S., and with U.S. crews), which essentially double Puerto Rico's cost for shipped goods relative to neighboring islands. On September 28, U.S. President Donald Trump waived the Act for ten days. === Biodiversity === Species endemic to the archipelago number 239 plants, 16 birds and 39 amphibians/reptiles, recognized as of 1998. Most of these (234, 12 and 33 respectively) are found on the main island. The most recognizable endemic species and a symbol of Puerto Rican pride is the coquí, a small frog easily identified by the sound of its call, from which it gets its name. Most coquí species (13 of 17) live in the El Yunque National Forest, a tropical rainforest in the northeast of the island previously known as the Caribbean National Forest. El Yunque is home to more than 240 plants, 26 of which are endemic to the island. It is also home to 50 bird species, including the critically endangered Puerto Rican amazon. Across the island in the southwest, the 40 km<sup>2</sup> (15 sq mi) of dry land at the Guánica Commonwealth Forest Reserve contain over 600 uncommon species of plants and animals, including 48 endangered species and 16 endemic to Puerto Rico. == Demographics == The population of Puerto Rico has been shaped by Amerindian settlement, European colonization, slavery, economic migration, and Puerto Rico's status as unincorporated territory of the United States. === Population makeup === The estimated population of Puerto Rico as of July 1, 2015, was 3,474,182, a 6.75% decrease since the 2010 United States Census. From 2000 to 2010, the population decreased, the first such decrease in census history for Puerto Rico. It went from the 3,808,610 residents registered in the 2000 Census to 3,725,789 in the 2010 Census. A declining and aging population presents additional problems for the society. The U.S. Census Bureau's estimate for July 1, 2016 was 3,411,307 people, down substantially from the 2010 data which had indicated 3,725,789 people. Continuous European immigration and high natural increase helped the population of Puerto Rico grow from 155,426 in 1800, to almost a million by the close of the 19th century. A census conducted by royal decree on September 30, 1858, gave the following totals of the Puerto Rican population at that time: 341,015 were Free colored; 300,430 identified as Whites; and 41,736 were slaves. During the 19th century hundreds of families arrived in Puerto Rico, primarily from the Canary Islands and Andalusia, but also from other parts of Spain such as Catalonia, Asturias, Galicia and the Balearic Islands and numerous Spanish loyalists from Spain's former colonies in South America. Settlers from outside Spain also arrived in the islands, including from Corsica, France, Lebanon, China, Portugal, Ireland, Scotland, Germany and Italy. This immigration from non-Hispanic countries was the result of the Real Cedula de Gracias de 1815 ("Royal Decree of Graces of 1815"), which allowed European Catholics to settle in the island with land allotments in the interior of the island, provided they paid taxes and continued to support the Catholic Church. Between 1960 and 1990 the census questionnaire in Puerto Rico did not ask about race or ethnicity. The 2000 United States Census included a racial self-identification question in Puerto Rico. According to the census, most Puerto Ricans identified as White and Hispanic; few identified as Black or some other race. ===== Population genetics ===== A recent population genetics study conducted in Puerto Rico suggests that between 52.6% and 84% of the population possess some degree of Amerindian mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) in their maternal ancestry, usually in a combination with other ancestries such as aboriginal Guanche North-West African ancestry brought by Spanish settlers from the Canary Islands. In addition, these DNA studies show Amerindian ancestry in addition to the Taíno. One genetic study on the racial makeup of Puerto Ricans (including all races) found them to be roughly around 61% West Eurasian/North African (overwhelmingly of Spanish provenance), 27% Sub-Saharan African and 11% Native American. Another genetic study from 2007, claimed that "the average genomewide individual (ie. Puerto Rican) ancestry proportions have been estimated as 66%, 18%, and 16%, for European, West African, and Native American, respectively." Other study estimates 63.7% European, 21.2% (Sub-Saharan) African, and 15.2% Native American; European ancestry is more prevalent in the West and in Central Puerto Rico, African in Eastern Puerto Rico, and Native American in Northern Puerto Rico. A Pew Research survey indicated a literacy rate of 90.4% (adult population) in 2012 based on data from the United Nations and a life expectancy of 79.3 years. === Immigration and emigration === Puerto Rico has recently become the permanent home of over 100,000 legal residents. The vast majority of recent immigrants, both legal and illegal, come from the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Other sources sending in significant numbers of recent immigrants include Cuba, Mexico, Colombia, Panama, Jamaica, Venezuela, Spain, and Nigeria. Also, there are many non-Puerto Rican U.S. citizens settling in Puerto Rico, from the mainland United States and the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as Nuyoricans (stateside Puerto Ricans) coming back to Puerto Rico. Most recent immigrants settle in and around San Juan. Emigration is a major part of contemporary Puerto Rican history. Starting soon after

World War II, poverty, cheap airfares, and promotion by the island government caused waves of Puerto Ricans to move to the United States, particularly to the Northeastern states, and Florida. This trend continued even as Puerto Rico's economy improved and its birth rate declined. Puerto Ricans continue to follow a pattern of "circular migration", with some migrants returning to the island. In recent years, the population has declined markedly, falling nearly 1% in 2012 and an additional 1% (36,000 people) in 2013 due to a falling birthrate and emigration. According to the 2010 Census, the number of Puerto Ricans living in the United States outside of Puerto Rico far exceeds those living in Puerto Rico. Emigration exceeds immigration. As those who leave tend to be better educated than those that remain, this accentuates the drain on Puerto Rico's economy. Based on the July 1, 2016 estimate by the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of the Commonwealth had declined by 314,482 people since the 2010 Census data had been tabulated. === Population distribution === The most populous city is the capital, San Juan, with approximately 371,400 people based on a 2015 estimate by the Census Bureau. Other major cities include Bayamón, Carolina, Ponce, and Caguas. Of the ten most populous cities on the island, eight are located within what is considered San Juan's metropolitan area, while the other two are located in the south (Ponce) and west (Mayagüez) of the island. === Languages === The official languages of the executive branch of government of Puerto Rico are Spanish and English, with Spanish being the primary language. Spanish is, and has been, the only official language of the entire Commonwealth judiciary system, despite a 1902 English-only language law. However, all official business of the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico is conducted in English. English is the primary language of less than 10% of the population. Spanish is the dominant language of business, education and daily life on the island, spoken by nearly 95% of the population. The U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 update provides the following facts: 94.1% of adults speak Spanish, 5.8% speak only English, 78.3% do not speak English "very well". In Puerto Rico, public school instruction is conducted almost entirely in Spanish. There have been pilot programs in about a dozen of the over 1,400 public schools aimed at conducting instruction in English only. Objections from teaching staff are common, perhaps because many of them are not fully fluent in English. English is taught as a second language and is a compulsory subject from elementary levels to high school. The languages of the deaf community are American Sign Language and its local variant, Puerto Rican Sign Language. The Spanish of Puerto Rico has evolved into having many idiosyncrasies in vocabulary and syntax that differentiate it from the Spanish spoken elsewhere. As a product of Puerto Rican history, the island possesses a unique Spanish dialect. Puerto Rican Spanish utilizes many Taíno words, as well as English words. The largest influence on the Spanish spoken in Puerto Rico is that of the Canary Islands. The Spanish of Puerto Rico also includes Taíno words, typically in the context of vegetation, natural phenomena or primitive musical instruments. Similarly, words attributed to primarily West African languages were adopted in the contexts of foods, music or dances, particularly in coastal towns with concentrations of descendants of Sub-Saharan Africans. === Religion === The Roman Catholic Church was brought by Spanish colonists and gradually became the dominant religion in Puerto Rico. The first dioceses in the Americas, including that of Puerto Rico, were authorized by Pope Julius II in 1511. One Pope, John Paul II, visited Puerto Rico in October 1984. All municipalities in Puerto Rico have at least one Catholic church, most of which are located at the town center, or plaza. African slaves brought and maintained various ethnic African religious practices associated with different peoples; in particular, the Yoruba beliefs of Santería and/or Ifá, and the Kongo-derived Palo Mayombe. Some aspects were absorbed into syncretic Christianity. Protestantism, which was suppressed under the Spanish Catholic regime, has slightly reemerged under United States rule, making contemporary Puerto Rico more interconfessional than in previous centuries, although Catholicism continues to be the dominant religion. The first Protestant church, Iglesia de la Santísima Trinidad, was established in Ponce by the Anglican Diocese of Antigua in 1872. It was the first non-Roman Catholic Church in the entire Spanish Empire in the Americas. Pollster Pablo Ramos stated in 1998 that the population was 38% Roman Catholic, 28% Pentecostal, and 18% were members of independent churches, which would give a Protestant percentage of 46% if the last two populations are combined. Protestants collectively added up to almost two million people. Another researcher gave a more conservative assessment of the proportion of Protestants: Puerto Rico, by virtue of its long political association with the United States, is the most Protestant of Latin American countries, with a Protestant population of approximately 33 to 38 percent, the majority of whom are Pentecostal. David Stoll calculates that if we extrapolate the growth rates of evangelical churches from 1960–1985 for another twenty-five years Puerto Rico will become 75 percent evangelical. (Ana Adams: "Brincando el Charco..." in Power, Politics and Pentecostals in Latin America, Edward Cleary, ed., 1997. p. 164). The data provided for

2014 by Pew Research Center, is summarized in the chart to the right. An Associated Press article in March 2014 stated that "more than 70 percent of whom identify themselves as Catholic" but provided no source for this information. The CIA World Factbook reports that 85% of the population of Puerto Rico identifies as Roman Catholic, while 15% identify as Protestant and Other. Neither a date or a source for that information is provided and may not be recent. A 2013 Pew Research survey found that only about 45% of Puerto Rican adults identified themselves as Catholic, 29% as Protestant and 20% as unaffiliated with a religion. The people surveyed by Pew consisted of Puerto Ricans living in the 50 states and DC and may not be indicative of those living in the Commonwealth. By 2014, a Pew Research report, with the sub-title Widespread Change in a Historically Catholic Region, indicated that only 56% of Puerto Ricans were Catholic and that 33% were Protestant; this survey was completed between October 2013 and February 2014. An Eastern Orthodox community, the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos / St. Spyridon's Church is located in Trujillo Alto, and serves the small Orthodox community. This affiliation accounted for under 1% of the population in 2010 according to the Pew Research report. In 1940, Juanita García Peraza founded the Mita Congregation, the first religion of Puerto Rican origin. Taíno religious practices have been rediscovered/reinvented to a degree by a handful of advocates. Similarly, some aspects of African religious traditions have been kept by some adherents. In 1952, a handful of American Jews established the island's first synagogue; this religion accounts for under 1% of the population in 2010 according to the Pew Research report. The synagogue, called Sha'are Zedeck, hired its first rabbi in 1954. Puerto Rico has the largest Jewish community in the Caribbean, numbering 3000 people (date not stated), and is the only Caribbean island in which the Conservative, Reform and Orthodox Jewish movements all are represented. In 2007, there were about 5,000 Muslims in Puerto Rico, representing about 0.13% of the population. Eight mosques are located throughout the island, with most Muslims living in Río Piedras and Caguas, most of these Muslims are of Palestinian and Jordanian descent. In 2015, the 25,832 Jehovah's Witnesses represented about 0.70% of the population, with 324 congregations. The Padmasambhava Buddhist Center, whose followers practice Tibetan Buddhism, has a branch in Puerto Rico. == Government == Puerto Rico has 8 senatorial districts, 40 representative districts and 78 municipalities. It has a republican form of government with separation of powers subject to the jurisdiction and sovereignty of the United States. Its current powers are all delegated by the United States Congress and lack full protection under the United States Constitution. Puerto Rico's head of state is the President of the United States. The government of Puerto Rico, based on the formal republican system, is composed of three branches: the executive, legislative, and judicial branch. The executive branch is headed by the governor, currently Ricky Rosselló. The legislative branch consists of a bicameral legislature called the Legislative Assembly, made up of a Senate as its upper chamber and a House of Representatives as its lower chamber. The Senate is headed by the President of the Senate, currently Thomas Rivera Schatz, while the House of Representatives is headed by the Speaker of the House, currently Johnny Méndez. The governor and legislators are elected by popular vote every four years with the last election held in November 2016. The judicial branch is headed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico, currently Maite Oronoz Rodríguez. Members of the judicial branch are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. Puerto Rico is represented in the United States Congress by a nonvoting delegate, the Resident Commissioner, currently Jenniffer González. Current congressional rules have removed the Commissioner's power to vote in the Committee of the Whole, but the Commissioner can vote in committee. Puerto Rican elections are governed by the Federal Election Commission and the State Elections Commission of Puerto Rico. While residing in Puerto Rico, Puerto Ricans cannot vote in U.S. presidential elections, but they can vote in primaries. Puerto Ricans who become residents of a U.S. state can vote in presidential elections. Puerto Rico hosts consulates from 41 countries, mainly from the Americas and Europe, with most located in San Juan. As an unincorporated territory of the United States, Puerto Rico does not have any first-order administrative divisions as defined by the U.S. government, but has 78 municipalities at the second level. Mona Island is not a municipality, but part of the municipality of Mayagüez. Municipalities are subdivided into wards or barrios, and those into sectors. Each municipality has a mayor and a municipal legislature elected for a four-year term. The municipality of San Juan (previously called "town"), was founded first, in 1521, San Germán in 1570, Coamo in 1579, Arecibo in 1614, Aguada in 1692 and Ponce in 1692. An increase of settlement saw the founding of 30 municipalities in the 18th century and 34 in the 19th. Six were founded in the 20th century; the last was Florida in 1971. === Political parties and elections === Since 1952, Puerto Rico has had three main political parties: the Popular Democratic Party (PPD in Spanish), the New Progressive Party (PNP in

Spanish) and the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP). The three parties stand for different political status. The PPD, for example, seeks to maintain the island's status with the U.S. as a commonwealth, while the PNP, on the other hand, seeks to make Puerto Rico a state of the United States. The PIP, in contrast, seeks a complete separation from the United States by seeking to make Puerto Rico a sovereign nation. In terms of party strength, the PPD and PNP usually hold about 47% of the vote each while the PIP holds only about 5%. After 2007, other parties emerged on the island. The first, the Puerto Ricans for Puerto Rico Party (PPR in Spanish) was registered that same year. The party claims that it seeks to address the islands' problems from a status-neutral platform. But it ceased to remain as a registered party when it failed to obtain the required number of votes in the 2008 general election. Four years later, the 2012 election saw the emergence of the Movimiento Unión Soberanista (MUS; English: Sovereign Union Movement) and the Partido del Pueblo Trabajador (PPT; English: Working People's Party) but none obtained more than 1% of the vote. Other non-registered parties include the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, the Socialist Workers Movement, and the Hostosian National Independence Movement.

=== Law === The insular legal system is a blend of civil law and the common law systems. Puerto Rico is the only current U.S. possession whose legal system operates primarily in a language other than American English: namely, Spanish. Because the U.S. federal government operates primarily in English, all Puerto Rican attorneys must be bilingual in order to litigate in English in U.S. federal courts, and litigate federal preemption issues in Puerto Rican courts. Title 48 of the United States Code outlines the role of the United States Code to United States territories and insular areas such as Puerto Rico. After the U.S. government assumed control of Puerto Rico in 1901, it initiated legal reforms resulting in the adoption of codes of criminal law, criminal procedure, and civil procedure modeled after those then in effect in California. Although Puerto Rico has since followed the federal example of transferring criminal and civil procedure from statutory law to rules promulgated by the judiciary, several portions of its criminal law still reflect the influence of the California Penal Code. The judicial branch is headed by the Chief Justice of the Puerto Rico Supreme Court, which is the only appellate court required by the Constitution. All other courts are created by the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico. There is also a Federal District Court for Puerto Rico. Someone accused of a criminal act at the federal level may not be accused for the same act in a Commonwealth court, unlike a state court, since Puerto Rico as a territory lacks sovereignty separate from Congress as a state does. Such a parallel accusation would constitute double jeopardy.

=== Political status === The nature of Puerto Rico's political relationship with the U.S. is the subject of ongoing debate in Puerto Rico, the United States Congress, and the United Nations. Specifically, the basic question is whether Puerto Rico should remain a U.S. territory, become a U.S. state, or become an independent country.

===== Within the United States ===== Constitutionally, Puerto Rico is subject to the plenary powers of the United States Congress under the territorial clause of Article IV of the U.S. Constitution. Laws enacted at the federal level in the United States apply to Puerto Rico as well, regardless of its political status. Their residents do not have voting representation in the U.S. Congress. Like the different states of the United States, Puerto Rico lacks "the full sovereignty of an independent nation", for example, the power to manage its "external relations with other nations", which is held by the U.S. federal government. The Supreme Court of the United States has indicated that once the U.S. Constitution has been extended to an area (by Congress or the courts), its coverage is irrevocable. To hold that the political branches may switch the Constitution on or off at will would lead to a regime in which they, not this Court, say "what the law is". Puerto Ricans "were collectively made U.S. citizens" in 1917 as a result of the Jones-Shafroth Act. U.S. citizens residing in Puerto Rico cannot vote for the U.S. president, though both major parties, Republican and Democratic, run primary elections in Puerto Rico to send delegates to vote on a presidential candidate. Since Puerto Rico is an unincorporated territory (see above) and not a U.S. state, the United States Constitution does not fully enfranchise U.S. citizens residing in Puerto Rico. Only fundamental rights under the American federal constitution and adjudications are applied to Puerto Ricans. Various other U.S. Supreme Court decisions have held which rights apply in Puerto Rico and which ones do not. Puerto Ricans have a long history of service in the U.S. Armed Forces and, since 1917, they have been included in the U.S. compulsory draft whenever it has been in effect. Though the Commonwealth government has its own tax laws, Puerto Ricans are also required to pay many kinds of U.S. federal taxes, not including the federal personal income tax for Puerto Rico-sourced income, but only under certain circumstances. In 2009, Puerto Rico paid \$3.742 billion into the U.S. Treasury. Residents of Puerto Rico pay into Social Security, and are thus eligible for Social Security benefits upon retirement. They are excluded from the Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and the island actually receives a smaller fraction of the Medicaid funding it

would receive if it were a U.S. state. Also, Medicare providers receive less-than-full state-like reimbursements for services rendered to beneficiaries in Puerto Rico, even though the latter paid fully into the system. While a state may try an individual for the same crime he/she was tried in federal court, this is not the case in Puerto Rico. Being a U.S. territory, Puerto Rico's authority to enact a criminal code derives from Congress and not from local sovereignty as with the states. Thus, such a parallel accusation would constitute double jeopardy and is constitutionally impermissible. In 1992, President George H. W. Bush issued a memorandum to heads of executive departments and agencies establishing the current administrative relationship between the federal government and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. This memorandum directs all federal departments, agencies, and officials to treat Puerto Rico administratively as if it were a state, insofar as doing so would not disrupt federal programs or operations. Many federal executive branch agencies have significant presence in Puerto Rico, just as in any state, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Transportation Security Administration, Social Security Administration, and others. While Puerto Rico has its own Commonwealth judicial system similar to that of a U.S. state, there is also a U.S. federal district court in Puerto Rico, and Puerto Ricans have served as judges in that Court and in other federal courts on the U.S. mainland regardless of their residency status at the time of their appointment. Sonia Sotomayor, a New Yorker of Puerto Rican descent, serves as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Puerto Ricans have also been frequently appointed to high-level federal positions, including serving as United States Ambassadors to other nations. === Foreign and intergovernmental relations === Puerto Rico is subject to the Commerce and Territorial Clause of the Constitution of the United States and, therefore, is restricted on how it can engage with other nations, sharing the opportunities and limitations that state governments have albeit not being one. As is the case with state governments, regardless, it has established several trade agreements with other nations, particularly with Hispanic American countries such as Colombia and Panamá. It has also established trade promotion offices in many foreign countries, all Spanish-speaking, and within the United States itself, which now include Spain, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Colombia, Washington, D.C., New York City and Florida, and has included in the past offices in Chile, Costa Rica, and Mexico. Such agreements require permission from the U.S. Department of State; most, are simply allowed by existing laws or trade treaties between the United States and other nations which supersede trade agreements pursued by Puerto Rico and different U.S. states. At the local level, Puerto Rico established by law that the international relations which states and territories are allowed to engage must be handled by the Department of State of Puerto Rico, an executive department, headed by the Secretary of State of Puerto Rico, who also serves as the territory's lieutenant governor. It is also charged to liaise with general consuls and honorary consuls based in Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration, along with the Office of the Resident Commissioner, manage all its intergovernmental affairs before entities of or in the United States (including the federal government of the United States, local and state governments of the United States, and public or private entities in the United States). Both entities frequently assist the Department of State of Puerto Rico in engaging with Washington, D.C.-based ambassadors and federal agencies that handle Puerto Rico's foreign affairs, such as the U.S. Department of State, the Agency for International Development, and others. The current Secretary of State is Víctor Suárez Meléndez from the Popular Democratic Party and member of the Democratic Party of the United States, while the current Director of the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration is Juan Eugenio Hernández Mayoral also from the Popular Democratic and member of the Democratic Party. The Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico, the delegate elected by Puerto Ricans to represent them before the federal government, including the U.S. Congress, sits in the United States House of Representatives, serves and votes on congressional committees, and functions in every respect as a legislator except being denied a vote on the final disposition of legislation on the House floor, also engages in foreign affairs to the same extent as other members of Congress. The current Resident Commissioner is Pedro Pierluisi from the New Progressive Party and member of the Democratic Party of the United States. Many Puerto Ricans have served as United States ambassadors to different nations and international organizations, such as the Organization of American States, mostly but not exclusively in Latin America. For example, Maricarmen Aponte, a Puerto Rican and now an Acting Assistant Secretary of State, previously served as U.S. ambassador to El Salvador. === Military === As it is a territory of the United States of America, the defense of Puerto Rico is provided by the United States as part of the Treaty of Paris with the President of the United States as its commander-in-chief. Puerto Rico has its own Puerto Rico National Guard, and its own state defense force, the Puerto Rico



State Guard, which by local law is under the authority of the Puerto Rico National Guard. The commander-in-chief of both local forces is the governor of Puerto Rico who delegates his authority to the Puerto Rico Adjutant General, currently Brigadier General Isabelo Rivera. The Adjutant General, in turn, delegates the authority over the State Guard to another officer but retains the authority over the Puerto Rico National Guard as a whole. U.S. military installations in Puerto Rico were part of the U.S. Atlantic Command (LANTCOM after 1993 USACOM), which had authority over all U.S. military operations that took place throughout the Atlantic. Puerto Rico had been seen as crucial in supporting LANTCOM's mission until 1999, when U.S. Atlantic Command was renamed and given a new mission as United States Joint Forces Command. Puerto Rico is currently under the responsibility of United States Northern Command. Both the Naval Forces Caribbean (NFC) and the Fleet Air Caribbean (FAIR) were formerly based at the Roosevelt Roads Naval Station. The NFC had authority over all U.S. Naval activity in the waters of the Caribbean while FAIR had authority over all U.S. military flights and air operations over the Caribbean. With the closing of the Roosevelt Roads and Vieques Island training facilities, the U.S. Navy has basically exited from Puerto Rico, except for the ships that steam by, and the only significant military presence in the island is the U.S. Army at Ft Buchanan, the Puerto Rican Army and Air National Guards, and the U.S. Coast Guard. Protests over the noise of bombing practice forced the closure of the naval base. This resulted in a loss of 6,000 jobs and an annual decrease in local income of \$300 million. A branch of the U.S. Army National Guard is stationed in Puerto Rico — known as the Puerto Rico Army National Guard — which performs missions equivalent to those of the Army National Guards of the different states of the United States, including ground defense, disaster relief, and control of civil unrest. The local National Guard also incorporates a branch of the U.S. Air National Guard — known as the Puerto Rico Air National Guard — which performs missions equivalent to those of the Air National Guards of each one of the U.S. states. At different times in the 20th century, the U.S. had about 25 military or naval installations in Puerto Rico, some very small ones, as well as large installations. The largest of these installations were the former Roosevelt Roads Naval Station in Ceiba, the Atlantic Fleet Weapons Training Facility (AFWTF) on Vieques, the National Guard training facility at Camp Santiago in Salinas, Fort Allen in Juana Diaz, the Army's Fort Buchanan in San Juan, the former U.S. Air Force Ramey Air Force Base in Aguadilla, and the Puerto Rico Air National Guard at Muñiz Air Force base in San Juan. The former U.S. Navy facilities at Roosevelt Roads, Vieques, and Sabana Seca have been deactivated and partially turned over to the local government. Other than U.S. Coast Guard and Puerto Rico National Guard facilities, there are only two remaining military installations in Puerto Rico: the U.S. Army's small Ft. Buchanan (supporting local veterans and reserve units) and the PRANG (Puerto Rico Air National Guard) Muñiz Air Base (the C-130 Fleet). In recent years, the U.S. Congress has considered their deactivations, but these have been opposed by diverse public and private entities in Puerto Rico – such as retired military who rely on Ft. Buchanan for the services available there. Puerto Ricans have participated in many of the military conflicts in which the United States has been involved. For example, they participated in the American Revolution, when volunteers from Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Mexico fought the British in 1779 under the command of General Bernardo de Gálvez (1746–1786), and have continued to participate up to the present-day conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. A significant number of Puerto Ricans participate as members and work for the U.S. Armed Services, largely as National Guard members and civilian employees. The size of the overall military-related community in Puerto Rico is estimated to be 100,000 individuals. This includes retired personnel. Fort Buchanan has about 4,000 military and civilian personnel. In addition, approximately 17,000 people are members of the Puerto Rico Army and Air National Guards, or the U.S. Reserve forces. Puerto Rican soldiers have served in every U.S. military conflict from World War I to the current military engagement known by the United States and its allies as the War against Terrorism. The 65th Infantry Regiment, nicknamed "The Borinqueneers" from the original Taíno name of the island (Borinquen), is a Puerto Rican regiment of the United States Army. The regiment's motto is Honor et Fidelitas, Latin for Honor and Fidelity. The 65th Infantry Regiment participated in World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the War on Terror and in 2014 was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, presented by President Barack Obama, for its heroism during the Korean War. ===

Administrative divisions === There are no counties, as there are in 48 of the 50 United States. There are 78 municipalities. Municipalities are subdivided into barrios, and those into sectors. Each municipality has a mayor and a municipal legislature elected to four-year terms. == Economy == The economy of Puerto Rico is classified as a high income economy by the World Bank and as the most competitive economy in Latin America by the World Economic Forum but Puerto Rico currently has a public debt of \$72.204 billion (equivalent to 103% of GNP), and a government deficit of \$2.5 billion.

According to World Bank, gross national income per capita of Puerto Rico in 2013 is \$23,830 (PPP, International Dollars), ranked as 63rd among all sovereign and dependent territories entities in the world. Its economy is mainly driven by manufacturing (primarily pharmaceuticals, textiles, petrochemicals and electronics) followed by the service industry (primarily finance, insurance, real estate and tourism). In recent years, the territory has also become a popular destination for MICE (meetings, incentives, conferencing, exhibitions), with a modern convention centre district overlooking the Port of San Juan. The geography of Puerto Rico and its political status are both determining factors on its economic prosperity, primarily due to its relatively small size as an island; its lack of natural resources used to produce raw materials, and, consequently, its dependence on imports; as well as its territorial status with the United States, which controls its foreign policy while exerting trading restrictions, particularly in its shipping industry. Puerto Rico experienced a recession from 2006 to 2011, interrupted by 4 quarters of economic growth, and entered into recession again in 2013, following growing fiscal imbalance and the expiration of the IRS Section 936 corporate incentives that the U.S. Internal Revenue Code had applied to Puerto Rico. This IRS section was critical to the economy, as it established tax exemptions for U.S. corporations that settled in Puerto Rico, and allowed their insular subsidiaries to send their earnings to the parent corporation at any time, without paying federal tax on corporate income. Puerto Rico has surprisingly been able to maintain a relatively low inflation in the past decade while maintaining a purchasing power parity per capita higher than 80% of the rest of the world. Academically, most of Puerto Rico's economic woes stem from federal regulations that expired, have been repealed, or no longer apply to Puerto Rico; its inability to become self-sufficient and self-sustainable throughout history; its highly politicized public policy which tends to change whenever a political party gains power; as well as its highly inefficient local government which has accrued a public debt equal to 68% of its gross domestic product throughout time. In comparison to the different states of the United States, Puerto Rico is poorer than Mississippi (the poorest state of the U.S.) with 41% of its population below the poverty line. When compared to Latin America, Puerto Rico has the highest GDP per capita in the region. Its main trading partners are the United States itself, Ireland, and Japan, with most products coming from East Asia, mainly from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. At a global scale, Puerto Rico's dependency on oil for transportation and electricity generation, as well as its dependency on food imports and raw materials, makes Puerto Rico volatile and highly reactive to changes in the world economy and climate. Puerto Rico's agricultural sector represents less than 1% of GNP. === Heavy debt load === In early 2017, the Puerto Rican government-debt crisis posed serious problems for the government which was saddled with outstanding bond debt that had climbed to \$70 billion at a time with a 45 percent poverty rate and 12.4% unemployment that is more than twice the mainland U.S. average. The debt had been increasing during a decade long recession. The Commonwealth had been defaulting on many debts, including bonds, since 2015. With debt payments due, the Governor was facing the risk of a government shutdown and failure to fund the managed health care system. "Without action before April, Puerto Rico's ability to execute contracts for Fiscal Year 2018 with its managed care organizations will be threatened, thereby putting at risk beginning July 1, 2017 the health care of up to 900,000 poor U.S. citizens living in Puerto Rico", according to a letter sent to Congress by the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Health and Human Services. They also said that "Congress must enact measures recommended by both Republicans and Democrats that fix Puerto Rico's inequitable health care financing structure and promote sustained economic growth." Initially, the oversight board created under PROMESA called for Puerto Rico's governor Ricardo Rosselló to deliver a fiscal turnaround plan by January 28. Just before that deadline, the control board gave the Commonwealth government until February 28 to present a fiscal plan (including negotiations with creditors for restructuring debt) to solve the problems. A moratorium on lawsuits by debtors was extended to May 31. It is essential for Puerto Rico to reach restructuring deals to avoid a bankruptcy-like process under PROMESA. An internal survey conducted by the Puerto Rican Economists Association revealed that the majority of Puerto Rican economists reject the policy recommendations of the Board and the Rosselló government, with more than 80% of economists arguing in favor of auditing the debt. In early August 2017, the island's financial oversight board (created by PROMESA) planned to institute two days off without pay per month for government employees, down from the original plan of four days per month; the latter had been expected to achieve \$218 million in savings. Governor Rossello rejected this plan as unjustified and unnecessary. Pension reforms were also discussed including a proposal for a 10% reduction in benefits to begin addressing the \$50 billion in unfunded pension liabilities. === Public finances === Puerto Rico has an operating budget of about U.S.\$9.8 billion with expenses at about \$10.4 billion, creating a structural deficit of

\$775 million (about 7.9% of the budget). The practice of approving budgets with a structural deficit has been done for 18 consecutive years starting in 2000. Throughout those years, including present time, all budgets contemplated issuing bonds to cover these projected deficits rather than making structural adjustments. This practice increased Puerto Rico's cumulative debt, as the government had already been issuing bonds to balance its actual budget for four decades since 1973. Projected deficits added substantial burdens to an already indebted nation which accrued a public debt of \$71B or about 70% of Puerto Rico's gross domestic product. This sparked an ongoing government-debt crisis after Puerto Rico's general obligation bonds were downgraded to speculative non-investment grade ("junk status") by three credit rating agencies. In terms of financial control, almost 9.6%—or about \$1.5 billion—of Puerto Rico's central government budget expenses for FY2014 is expected to be spent on debt service. Harsher budget cuts are expected as Puerto Rico must now repay larger chunks of debts in the following years. For practical reasons the budget is divided into two aspects: a "general budget" which comprises the assignments funded exclusively by the Department of Treasury of Puerto Rico, and the "consolidated budget" which comprises the assignments funded by the general budget, by Puerto Rico's government-owned corporations, by revenue expected from loans, by the sale of government bonds, by subsidies extended by the federal government of the United States, and by other funds. Both budgets contrast each other drastically, with the consolidated budget being usually thrice the size of the general budget; currently \$29B and \$9.0B respectively. Almost one out of every four dollars in the consolidated budget comes from U.S. federal subsidies while government-owned corporations compose more than 31% of the consolidated budget. The critical aspects come from the sale of bonds, which comprise 7% of the consolidated budget – a ratio that increased annually due to the government's inability to prepare a balanced budget in addition to being incapable of generating enough income to cover all its expenses. In particular, the government-owned corporations add a heavy burden to the overall budget and public debt, as none is self-sufficient. For example, in FY2011 the government-owned corporations reported aggregated losses of more than \$1.3B with the Puerto Rico Highways and Transportation Authority (PRHTA) reporting losses of \$409M, the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA; the government monopoly that controls all electricity on the island) reporting losses of \$272M, while the Puerto Rico Aqueducts and Sewers Authority (PRASA; the government monopoly that controls all water utilities on the island) reported losses of \$112M. Losses by government-owned corporations have been defrayed through the issuance of bonds compounding more than 40% of Puerto Rico's entire public debt today. Holistically, from FY2000–FY2010 Puerto Rico's debt grew at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9% while GDP remained stagnant. This has not always provided a long-term solution. In early July 2017 for example, the PREPA power authority was effectively bankrupt after defaulting in a plan to restructure \$9 billion in bond debt; the agency planned to seek Court protection. In terms of protocol, the governor, together with the Puerto Rico Office of Management and Budget (OGP in Spanish), formulates the budget he believes is required to operate all government branches for the ensuing fiscal year. He then submits this formulation as a budget request to the Puerto Rican legislature before July 1, the date established by law as the beginning of Puerto Rico's fiscal year. While the constitution establishes that the request must be submitted "at the beginning of each regular session", the request is typically submitted during the first week of May as the regular sessions of the legislature begin in January and it would be impractical to submit a request so far in advance. Once submitted, the budget is then approved by the legislature, typically with amendments, through a joint resolution and is referred back to the governor for his approval. The governor then either approves it or vetoes it. If vetoed the legislature can then either refer it back with amendments for the governor's approval, or approve it without the governor's consent by two-thirds of the bodies of each chamber. Once the budget is approved, the Department of Treasury disburses funds to the Office of Management and Budget which in turn disburses the funds to the respective agencies, while the Puerto Rico Government Development Bank (the government's intergovernmental bank) manages all related banking affairs including those related to the government-owned corporations. === Cost of living === The cost of living in Puerto Rico is high and has increased over the past decade. San Juan's in particular is higher than Atlanta, Dallas, and Seattle but lower than Boston, Chicago, and New York City. One factor is housing prices which are comparable to Miami and Los Angeles, although property taxes are considerably lower than most places in the United States. Statistics used for cost of living sometimes do not take into account certain costs, such as the high cost of electricity, which has hovered in the 24¢ to 30¢ range per kilowatt/hour, two to three times the national average, increased travel costs for longer flights, additional shipping fees, and the loss of promotional participation opportunities for customers "outside the continental United States".

While some online stores do offer free shipping on orders to Puerto Rico, many merchants exclude Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico and other United States territories. The household median income is stated as \$19,350 and the mean income as \$30,463 in the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 update. The report also indicates that 45.5% of individuals are below the poverty level. The median home value in Puerto Rico ranges from U.S.\$100,000 to U.S.\$214,000, while the national median home value sits at \$119,600. One of the most cited contributors to the high cost of living in Puerto Rico is the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, also known as the Jones Act, which prevents foreign-flagged ships from carrying cargo between two American ports, a practice known as cabotage. Because of the Jones Act, foreign ships inbound with goods from Central and South America, Western Europe, and Africa cannot stop in Puerto Rico, offload Puerto Rico-bound goods, load mainland-bound Puerto Rico-manufactured goods, and continue to U.S. ports. Instead, they must proceed directly to U.S. ports, where distributors break bulk and send Puerto Rico-bound manufactured goods to Puerto Rico across the ocean by U.S.-flagged ships. The local government of Puerto Rico has requested several times to the U.S. Congress to exclude Puerto Rico from the Jones Act restrictions without success. The most recent measure has been taken by the 17th Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico through R. Conc. del S. 21. These measures have always received support from all the major local political parties. In 2013 the Government Accountability Office published a report which concluded that "repealing or amending the Jones Act cabotage law might cut Puerto Rico shipping costs" and that "shippers believed that opening the trade to non-U.S.-flag competition could lower costs". However, the same GAO report also found that "[shippers] doing business in Puerto Rico that GAO contacted reported that the freight rates are often—although not always—lower for foreign carriers going to and from Puerto Rico and foreign locations than the rates shippers pay to ship similar cargo to and from the United States, despite longer distances. Data were not available to allow us to validate the examples given or verify the extent to which this difference occurred." Ultimately, the report concluded that "[the] effects of modifying the application of the Jones Act for Puerto Rico are highly uncertain" for both Puerto Rico and the United States, particularly for the U.S. shipping industry and the military preparedness of the United States. == Education == The first school in Puerto Rico was the Escuela de Gramática (Grammar School). It was established by Bishop Alonso Manso in 1513, in the area where the Cathedral of San Juan was to be constructed. The school was free of charge and the courses taught were Latin language, literature, history, science, art, philosophy and theology. Education in Puerto Rico is divided in three levels—Primary (elementary school grades 1–6), Secondary (intermediate and high school grades 7–12), and Higher Level (undergraduate and graduate studies). As of 2002, the literacy rate of the Puerto Rican population was 94.1%; by gender, it was 93.9% for males and 94.4% for females. According to the 2000 Census, 60.0% of the population attained a high school degree or higher level of education, and 18.3% has a bachelor's degree or higher. Instruction at the primary school level is compulsory between the ages of 5 and 18. As of 2010, there are 1539 public schools and 806 private schools. The largest and oldest university system is the public University of Puerto Rico (UPR) with 11 campuses. The largest private university systems on the island are the Sistema Universitario Ana G. Mendez which operates the Universidad del Turabo, Metropolitan University and Universidad del Este. Other private universities include the multi-campus Inter American University, the Pontifical Catholic University, Universidad Politécnica de Puerto Rico, and the Universidad del Sagrado Corazón. Puerto Rico has four schools of Medicine and three ABA-approved Law Schools. == Public health and safety == As of 2015 medical care in Puerto Rico had been heavily impacted by emigration of doctors to the mainland and underfunding of the Medicare and Medicaid programs which serve 60% of the island's population. Affordable medical insurance under the Affordable Care Act is not available in Puerto Rico as, since Puerto Ricans pay no income tax, no subsidies are available. The city of San Juan has a system of triage, hospital, and preventive care health services. The municipal government sponsors regular health fairs in different areas of the city focusing on health care for the elderly and the disabled. In 2017, there were 69 hospitals in Puerto Rico. There are twenty hospitals in San Juan, half of which are operated by the government. The largest hospital is the Centro Médico de Río Piedras (the Río Piedras Medical Center). Founded in 1956, it is operated by the Medical Services Administration of the Department of Health of Puerto Rico, and is actually a network of eight hospitals: San Juan Municipal Hospital: This hospital is operated by the San Juan municipal government. Industrial Hospital: This is the hospital for Puerto Rico government employees, whether municipal or Commonwealth government employees. Normally, injured police officers and firefighters are cared for here. San Juan Pediatric Hospital – Also operated by the San Juan municipal government. Pediatric Hospital: Operated by the government of the Commonwealth, this is the main trauma hospital for pediatric cases. Centro Medico

Emergency Room: This is the main hospital for trauma cases for Puerto Rico and the Caribbean.

Centro Cardiovascular del Caribe (Caribbean Cardiovascular Center): This is the main hospital for open heart surgery in the Caribbean. It features a hotel for the patients' families.

Psychiatric Hospital: The main psychiatric hospital in Puerto Rico. Operated by the government of Puerto Rico.

Psychiatric Correctional Hospital: It is both a hospital and correctional facility. It is operated jointly by the Puerto Rico Department of Corrections and the Medical Services Administration.

The city of San Juan operates nine other hospitals. Of these, eight are Diagnostic and Treatment Centers located in communities throughout San Juan. These nine hospitals are: La Perla, Puerta de Tierra, Llorens Torres, Puerto Nuevo, San José, Río Piedras, Sabana Llena, Hoare, Santurce, Parada 19. There are also ten private hospitals in San Juan. These are: Hospital Metropolitano, Hospital Auxilio Mutuo, Hospital Auxilio Mutuo Expreso, Hospital de Veteranos.

The main Veterans hospital in the Caribbean. Operated by the U.S. Veteran Healthcare System.

Ashford Presbyterian Hospital, Hospital Pavia, Hato Rey Hospital, Pavia, Santurce, San Jorge Children's Hospital: The most well known children's hospital in the San Juan Metropolitan Area.

Hospital San Gerardo: Located at the Cupey neighborhood, is a small hospital but is also specialized in psychiatry and elderly.

Hospital del Maestro (Teachers Hospital): Located in Hato Rey, this hospital is operated by the Puerto Rico Teachers Association.

The city of Ponce is served by several clinics and hospitals. There are four comprehensive care hospitals: Hospital Dr. Pila, Hospital San Cristobal, Hospital San Lucas, and Hospital de Damas. In addition, Hospital Oncológico Andrés Grillasca specializes in the treatment of cancer, and Hospital Siquiátrico specializes in mental disorders. There is also a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic that provides health services to U.S. veterans. The U.S. Veterans Administration will build a new hospital in the city to satisfy regional needs. Hospital de Damas is listed in the U.S. News & World Report as one of the best hospitals under the U.S. flag. Ponce has the highest concentration of medical infrastructure per inhabitant of any municipality in Puerto Rico. On the island of Culebra, there is a small hospital in the island called Hospital de Culebra. It also offers pharmacy services to residents and visitors. For emergencies, patients are transported by plane to Fajardo on the main island. The town of Caguas has three hospitals: Hospital Hima, San Pablo, Menonita, Caguas Regional Hospital, and the San Juan Bautista Medical Center. The town of Cayey is served by the Hospital Menonita de Cayey, and the Hospital Municipal de Cayey.

Reforma de Salud de Puerto Rico (Puerto Rico Health Reform) – locally referred to as La Reforma (The Reform) – is a government-run program which provides medical and health care services to the indigent and impoverished, by means of contracting private health insurance companies, rather than employing government-owned hospitals and emergency centers. The Reform is administered by the Puerto Rico Health Insurance Administration.

=== Crime === The overall rate of crime is low in Puerto Rico. The territory has a high firearm homicide rate. The homicide rate of 19.2 per 100,000 inhabitants was significantly higher than any U.S. state in 2014. Most homicide victims are gang members and drug traffickers with about 80% of homicides in Puerto Rico being drug related.

== Culture == Modern Puerto Rican culture is a unique mix of cultural antecedents: including European (predominantly Spanish, Italian, French, German and Irish), African, and, more recently, some North American and lots of South Americans. A large number of Cubans and Dominicans have relocated to the island in the past few decades. From the Spanish, Puerto Rico received the Spanish language, the Catholic religion and the vast majority of their cultural and moral values and traditions. The United States added English-language influence, the university system and the adoption of some holidays and practices. On March 12, 1903, the University of Puerto Rico was officially founded, branching out from the "Escuela Normal Industrial", a smaller organization that was founded in Fajardo three years before. Much of Puerto Rican culture centers on the influence of music and has been shaped by other cultures combining with local and traditional rhythms. Early in the history of Puerto Rican music, the influences of Spanish and African traditions were most noticeable. The cultural movements across the Caribbean and North America have played a vital role in the more recent musical influences which have reached Puerto Rico. The official symbols of Puerto Rico are the reinita mora or Puerto Rican spindalis (a type of bird), the flor de maga (a type of flower), and the ceiba or kapok (a type of tree). The unofficial animal and a symbol of Puerto Rican pride is the coquí, a small frog. Other popular symbols of Puerto Rico are the jíbaro (the "countryman"), and the carite.

=== Architecture === The architecture of Puerto Rico demonstrates a broad variety of traditions, styles and national influences accumulated over four centuries of Spanish rule, and a century of American rule. Spanish colonial architecture, Ibero-Islamic, art deco, post-modern, and many other architectural forms are visible throughout the island. From town to town, there are also many regional distinctions. Old San Juan is one of the two barrios, in addition to Santurce, that made up the municipality of San Juan from 1864 to 1951, at which time the former

independent municipality of Río Piedras was annexed. With its abundance of shops, historic places, museums, open air cafés, restaurants, gracious homes, tree-shaded plazas, and its old beauty and architectural peculiarity, Old San Juan is a main spot for local and internal tourism. The district is also characterized by numerous public plazas and churches including San José Church and the Cathedral of San Juan Bautista, which contains the tomb of the Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León. It also houses the oldest Catholic school for elementary education in Puerto Rico, the Colegio de Párvulos, built in 1865. The oldest parts of the district of Old San Juan remain partly enclosed by massive walls. Several defensive structures and notable forts, such as the emblematic Fort San Felipe del Morro, Fort San Cristóbal, and El Palacio de Santa Catalina, also known as La Fortaleza, acted as the primary defenses of the settlement which was subjected to numerous attacks. La Fortaleza continues to serve also as the executive mansion for the Governor of Puerto Rico. Many of the historic fortifications are part of San Juan National Historic Site. During the 1940s, sections of Old San Juan fell into disrepair, and many renovation plans were suggested. There was even a strong push to develop Old San Juan as a "small Manhattan". Strict remodeling codes were implemented to prevent new constructions from affecting the common colonial Spanish architectural themes of the old city. When a project proposal suggested that the old Carmelite Convent in San Juan be demolished to erect a new hotel, the Institute had the building declared as a historic building, and then asked that it be converted to a hotel in a renewed facility. This was what became the Hotel El Convento in Old San Juan. The paradigm to reconstruct and renovate the old city and revitalize it has been followed by other cities in the Americas, particularly Havana, Lima and Cartagena de Indias. Ponce Creole is an architectural style created in Ponce, Puerto Rico, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This style of Puerto Rican buildings is found predominantly in residential homes in Ponce that developed between 1895 and 1920. Ponce Creole architecture borrows heavily from the traditions of the French, the Spaniards, and the Caribbean to create houses that were especially built to withstand the hot and dry climate of the region, and to take advantage of the sun and sea breezes characteristic of the southern Puerto Rico's Caribbean Sea coast. It is a blend of wood and masonry, incorporating architectural elements of other styles, from Classical revival and Spanish Revival to Victorian.

=== Arts === Puerto Rican art reflects many influences, much from its ethnically diverse background. A form of folk art, called santos evolved from the Catholic Church's use of sculptures to convert indigenous Puerto Ricans to Christianity. Santos depict figures of saints and other religious icons and are made from native wood, clay, and stone. After shaping simple, they are often finished by painting them in vivid colors. Santos vary in size, with the smallest examples around eight inches tall and the largest about twenty inches tall. Traditionally, santos were seen as messengers between the earth and Heaven. As such, they occupied a special place on household altars, where people prayed to them, asked for help, or tried to summon their protection. Also popular, caretas or vejigantes are masks worn during carnivals. Similar masks signifying evil spirits were used in both Spain and Africa, though for different purposes. The Spanish used their masks to frighten lapsed Christians into returning to the church, while tribal Africans used them as protection from the evil spirits they represented. True to their historic origins Puerto Rican caretas always bear at least several horns and fangs. While usually constructed of papier-mâché, coconut shells and fine metal screening are sometimes used as well. Red and black were the typical colors for caretas but their palette has expanded to include a wide variety of bright hues and patterns.

=== Literature === Puerto Rican literature evolved from the art of oral story telling to its present-day status. Written works by the native islanders of Puerto Rico were prohibited and repressed by the Spanish colonial government. Only those who were commissioned by the Spanish Crown to document the chronological history of the island were allowed to write. Diego de Torres Vargas was allowed to circumvent this strict prohibition for three reasons: he was a priest, he came from a prosperous Spanish family, and his father was a Sergeant Major in the Spanish Army, who died while defending Puerto Rico from an invasion by the Dutch armada. In 1647, Torres Vargas wrote *Descripción de la Ciudad e Isla de Puerto Rico* ("Description of the Island and City of Puerto Rico"). This historical book was the first to make a detailed geographic description of the island. The book described all the fruits and commercial establishments of the time, mostly centered in the towns of San Juan and Ponce. The book also listed and described every mine, church, and hospital in the island at the time. The book contained notices on the State and Capital, plus an extensive and erudite bibliography. *Descripción de la Ciudad e Isla de Puerto Rico* was the first successful attempt at writing a comprehensive history of Puerto Rico. Some of Puerto Rico's earliest writers were influenced by the teachings of Rafael Cordero. Among these was Dr. Manuel A. Alonso, the first Puerto Rican writer of notable importance. In 1849 he published *El Gíbaro*, a collection of verses whose main themes were the poor Puerto Rican country farmer. Eugenio María de

Hostos wrote *La peregrinación de Bayoán* in 1863, which used Bartolomé de las Casas as a spring board to reflect on Caribbean identity. After this first novel, Hostos abandoned fiction in favor of the essay which he saw as offering greater possibilities for inspiring social change. In the late 19th century, with the arrival of the first printing press and the founding of the Royal Academy of Belles Letters, Puerto Rican literature began to flourish. The first writers to express their political views in regard to Spanish colonial rule of the island were journalists. After the United States invaded Puerto Rico during the Spanish–American War and the island was ceded to the Americans as a condition of the Treaty of Paris of 1898, writers and poets began to express their opposition to the new colonial rule by writing about patriotic themes. Alejandro Tapia y Rivera, also known as the Father of Puerto Rican Literature, ushered in a new age of historiography with the publication of *The Historical Library of Puerto Rico*. Cayetano Coll y Toste was another Puerto Rican historian and writer. His work *The Indo-Antillano Vocabulary* is valuable in understanding the way the Taínos lived. Dr. Manuel Zeno Gandía in 1894 wrote *La Charca* and told about the harsh life in the remote and mountainous coffee regions in Puerto Rico. Dr. Antonio S. Pedreira, described in his work *Insularismo* the cultural survival of the Puerto Rican identity after the American invasion. With the Puerto Rican diaspora of the 1940s, Puerto Rican literature was greatly influenced by a phenomenon known as the Nuyorican Movement. Puerto Rican literature continued to flourish and many Puerto Ricans have since distinguished themselves as authors, journalists, poets, novelists, playwrights, screenwriters, essayists and have also stood out in other literary fields. The influence of Puerto Rican literature has transcended the boundaries of the island to the United States and the rest of the world. Over the past fifty years, significant writers include Ed Vega, Luis Rafael Sánchez, Piri Thomas, Giannina Braschi, and Miguel Piñero. Esmeralda Santiago has written an autobiographical trilogy about growing up in modern Puerto Rico as well as an historical novel, *Conquistadora*, about life on a sugar plantation during the mid-19th century.

=== Media === The media in Puerto Rico includes local radio stations, television stations and newspapers, the majority of which are conducted in Spanish. There are also three stations of the U.S. Armed Forces Radio and Television Service. Newspapers with daily distribution are *El Nuevo Día*, *El Vocero* and *Indice*, *Metro*, and *Primera Hora*. *El Vocero* is distributed free of charge as well as *Indice* and *Metro*. Newspapers distributed on a weekly or regional basis include *Claridad*, *La Perla del Sur*, *La Opinión*, *Vision*, and *La Estrella del Norte*, among others. Several television channels provide local content in the island. These include WIPR-TV, Telemundo, Univision Puerto Rico, WAPA-TV, and WKAQ-TV.

=== Music === The music of Puerto Rico has evolved as a heterogeneous and dynamic product of diverse cultural resources. The most conspicuous musical sources have been Spain and West Africa, although many aspects of Puerto Rican music reflect origins elsewhere in Europe and the Caribbean and, over the last century, from the U.S. Puerto Rican music culture today comprises a wide and rich variety of genres, ranging from indigenous genres like bomba, plena, aguinaldo, danza and salsa to recent hybrids like reggaeton. Puerto Rico has some national instruments, like the Cuatro (Spanish for Four). The cuatro is a local instrument that was made by the "Jibaro" or people from the mountains. Originally, the Cuatro consisted of four steel strings, hence its name, but currently the Cuatro consists of five double steel strings. It is easily confused with a guitar, even by locals. When held upright, from right to left, the strings are G, D, A, E, B. In the realm of classical music, the island hosts two main orchestras, the Orquesta Sinfónica de Puerto Rico and the Orquesta Filarmónica de Puerto Rico. The Casals Festival takes place annually in San Juan, drawing in classical musicians from around the world. With respect to opera, the legendary Puerto Rican tenor Antonio Paoli was so celebrated, that he performed private recitals for Pope Pius X and the Czar Nicholas II of Russia. In 1907, Paoli was the first operatic artist in world history to record an entire opera – when he participated in a performance of *Pagliacci* by Ruggiero Leoncavallo in Milan, Italy. Over the past fifty years, Puerto Rican artists such as Jorge Emmanuelli, Yomo Toro, Ramito, Jose Feliciano, Bobby Capo, Rafael Cortijo, Ismael Rivera, Chayanne, Tito Puente, Eddie Palmieri, Ray Barreto, Dave Valentin, Omar Rodríguez-López, Hector Lavoe, Ricky Martin, Marc Anthony and Luis Fonsi have gained fame internationally.

=== Cuisine === Puerto Rican cuisine has its roots in the cooking traditions and practices of Europe (Spain), Africa and the native Taínos. In the latter part of the 19th century, the cuisine of Puerto Rico was greatly influenced by the United States in the ingredients used in its preparation. Puerto Rican cuisine has transcended the boundaries of the island, and can be found in several countries outside the archipelago. Basic ingredients include grains and legumes, herbs and spices, starchy tropical tubers, vegetables, meat and poultry, seafood and shellfish, and fruits. Main dishes include mofongo, arroz con gandules, pasteles, alcapurrias and pig roast (or lechón). Beverages include mavi and piña colada. Desserts include flan, arroz con dulce (sweet rice pudding), piraguas, brazo gitanos, tembleque,

polvorones, and dulce de leche. Locals call their cuisine *cocina criolla*. The traditional Puerto Rican cuisine was well established by the end of the 19th century. By 1848 the first restaurant, La Mallorquina, opened in Old San Juan. El Cocinero Puertorriqueño, the island's first cookbook was published in 1849. From the diet of the Taíno people come many tropical roots and tubers like yautía (taro) and especially Yuca (cassava), from which thin cracker-like casabe bread is made. Ajicito or cachucha pepper, a slightly hot habanero pepper, recaó/culantro (spiny leaf), achiote (annatto), peppers, ají caballero (the hottest pepper native to Puerto Rico), peanuts, guavas, pineapples, jicacos (coco-plum), quenepas (mamoncillo), lerenes (Guinea arrowroot), calabazas (tropical pumpkins), and guanabanas (soursops) are all Taíno foods. The Taínos also grew varieties of beans and some maize/corn, but maize was not as dominant in their cooking as it was for the peoples living on the mainland of Mesoamerica. This is due to the frequent hurricanes that Puerto Rico experiences, which destroy crops of maize, leaving more safeguarded plants like conucos (hills of yuca grown together). Spanish / European influence is also seen in Puerto Rican cuisine. Wheat, chickpeas (garbanzos), capers, olives, olive oil, black pepper, onions, garlic, cilantrillo (cilantro), oregano, basil, sugarcane, citrus fruit, eggplant, ham, lard, chicken, beef, pork, and cheese all came to Borikén (Puerto Rico's native Taino name) from Spain. The tradition of cooking complex stews and rice dishes in pots such as rice and beans are also thought to be originally European (much like Italians, Spaniards, and the British). Early Dutch, French, Italian, and Chinese immigrants influenced not only the culture but Puerto Rican cooking as well. This great variety of traditions came together to form La Cocina Criolla. Coconuts, coffee (brought by the Arabs and Corsos to Yauco from Kafa, Ethiopia), okra, yams, sesame seeds, gandules (pigeon peas in English) sweet bananas, plantains, other root vegetables and Guinea hen, all come to Puerto Rico from Africa.

Philately === Puerto Rico has been commemorated on four U.S. postal stamps and four personalities have been featured. Insular Territories were commemorated in 1937, the third stamp honored Puerto Rico featuring 'La Fortaleza', the Spanish Governor's Palace. The first free election for governor of the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico was honored on April 27, 1949, at San Juan, Puerto Rico. 'Inauguration' on the 3-cent stamp refers to the election of Luis Muñoz Marín, the first democratically elected governor of Puerto Rico. San Juan, Puerto Rico was commemorated with an 8-cent stamp on its 450th anniversary issued September 12, 1971, featuring a sentry box from Castillo San Felipe del Morro. In the "Flags of our nation series" 2008–2012, of the fifty-five, five territorial flags were featured. Forever stamps included the Puerto Rico Flag illustrated by a bird issued 2011. Four Puerto Rican personalities have been featured on U.S. postage stamps. These include Roberto Clemente in 1984 as an individual and in the Legends of Baseball series issued in 2000. Luis Muñoz Marín in the Great Americans series, on February 18, 1990, Julia de Burgos in the Literary Arts series, issued 2010, and José Ferrer in the Distinguished American series, issued 2012.

Sports === Baseball was one of the first sports to gain widespread popularity in Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rico Baseball League serves as the only active professional league, operating as a winter league. No Major League Baseball franchise or affiliate plays in Puerto Rico, however, San Juan hosted the Montreal Expos for several series in 2003 and 2004 before they moved to Washington, D.C. and became the Washington Nationals. The Puerto Rico national baseball team has participated in the World Cup of Baseball winning one gold (1951), four silver and four bronze medals, the Caribbean Series (winning fourteen times) and the World Baseball Classic. On March 2006, San Juan's Hiram Bithorn Stadium hosted the opening round as well as the second round of the newly formed World Baseball Classic. Puerto Rican baseball players include Hall of Famers Roberto Clemente, Orlando Cepeda and Roberto Alomar, enshrined in 1973, 1999, and 2011 respectively. Boxing, basketball, and volleyball are considered popular sports as well. Wilfredo Gómez and McWilliams Arroyo have won their respective divisions at the World Amateur Boxing Championships. Other medalists include José Pedraza, who holds a silver medal, and three boxers who finished in third place, José Luis Vellón, Nelson Dieppa and McJoe Arroyo. In the professional circuit, Puerto Rico has the third-most boxing world champions and it is the global leader in champions per capita. These include Miguel Cotto, Félix Trinidad, Wilfred Benítez and Gómez among others. The Puerto Rico national basketball team joined the International Basketball Federation in 1957. Since then, it has won more than 30 medals in international competitions, including gold in three FIBA Americas Championships and the 1994 Goodwill Games August 8, 2004, became a landmark date for the team when it became the first team to defeat the United States in an Olympic tournament since the integration of National Basketball Association players. Winning the inaugural game with scores of 92–73 as part of the 2004 Summer Olympics organized in Athens, Greece. Baloncesto Superior Nacional acts as the top-level professional basketball league in Puerto Rico, and has experienced success since its beginning in 1930. Puerto



Rico is also a member of FIFA and CONCACAF. In 2008, the archipelago's first unified league, the Puerto Rico Soccer League, was established. Other sports include professional wrestling and road running. The World Wrestling Council and International Wrestling Association are the largest wrestling promotions in the main island. The World's Best 10K, held annually in San Juan, has been ranked among the 20 most competitive races globally. The "Puerto Rico All Stars" team, which has won twelve world championships in unicycle basketball. Organized Streetball has gathered some exposition, with teams like "Puerto Rico Street Ball" competing against established organizations including the Capitanes de Arecibo and AND1's Mixtape Tour Team. Six years after the first visit, AND1 returned as part of their renamed Live Tour, losing to the Puerto Rico Streetballers. Consequently, practitioners of this style have earned participation in international teams, including Orlando "El Gato" Meléndez, who became the first Puerto Rican born athlete to play for the Harlem Globetrotters. Orlando Antigua, whose mother is Puerto Rican, in 1995 became the first Hispanic and the first non-black in 52 years to play for the Harlem Globetrotters. Puerto Rico has representation in all international competitions including the Summer and Winter Olympics, the Pan American Games, the Caribbean World Series, and the Central American and Caribbean Games. Puerto Rico hosted the Pan Am Games in 1979 (officially in San Juan), and The Central American and Caribbean Games were hosted in 1993 in Ponce and in 2010 in Mayagüez. Puerto Rican athletes have won nine medals in Olympic competition (one gold, two silver, six bronze), the first one in 1948 by boxer Juan Evangelista Venegas. Monica Puig won the first gold medal for Puerto Rico in the Olympic Games by winning the Women's Tennis singles title in Rio 2016.

== Infrastructure == Cities and towns in Puerto Rico are interconnected by a system of roads, freeways, expressways, and highways maintained by the Highways and Transportation Authority under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Transportation, and patrolled by the Puerto Rico Police Department. The island's metropolitan area is served by a public bus transit system and a metro system called Tren Urbano (in English: Urban Train). Other forms of public transportation include seaborne ferries (that serve Puerto Rico's archipelago) as well as Carros Públicos (private mini buses). Puerto Rico has three international airports, the Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport in Carolina, Mercedita Airport in Ponce, and the Rafael Hernández Airport in Aguadilla, and 27 local airports. The Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport is the largest aerial transportation hub in the Caribbean. Puerto Rico has nine ports in different cities across the main island. The San Juan Port is the largest in Puerto Rico, and the busiest port in the Caribbean and the 10th busiest in the United States in terms of commercial activity and cargo movement, respectively. The second largest port is the Port of the Americas in Ponce, currently under expansion to increase cargo capacity to 1.5 million twenty-foot containers (TEUs) per year. The Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA)—Spanish: Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica (AEE)—is an electric power company and the government-owned corporation of Puerto Rico responsible for electricity generation, power transmission, and power distribution in Puerto Rico. PREPA is the only entity authorized to conduct such business in Puerto Rico, effectively making it a government monopoly. The Authority is ruled by a Governing Board appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate of Puerto Rico, and is run by an Executive Director.

Telecommunications in Puerto Rico includes radio, television, fixed and mobile telephones, and the Internet. Broadcasting in Puerto Rico is regulated by the U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC). As of 2007, there were 30 TV stations, 125 radio stations and roughly 1 million TV sets on the island. Cable TV subscription services are available and the U.S. Armed Forces Radio and Television Service also broadcast on the island.

== See also ==

== Notes ==

== References ==

== Further reading ==

Isar P. Godreau, *Scripts of Blackness: Race, Cultural nationalism, and U.S. Colonialism in Puerto Rico*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2015.

== External links ==

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