

= Currencies of Puerto Rico =

The currencies of Puerto Rico closely follow the historic development of Puerto Rico . As a colony of Spain and the United States , Puerto Rico was granted the use of both foreign and provincial currencies . Following the Spanish colonization in 1502 , Puerto Rico became an important port , with its own supply of gold . However , as the mineral reserves ran empty within the century , the archipelago 's economy suffered . The Spanish Crown issued the Situado Mexicano , which meant that a semi @-@ regular shipment of gold from the Viceroyalty of New Spain would be sent to the island , as a way to provide economic support . Between 1636 and 1637 , Philip IV of Spain imposed a tax which had to be paid using a revenue stamp . Inspired by this , Puerto Rico began producing banknotes in 1766 , becoming the first colony to print 8 @-@ real banknotes in the Spanish Empire and which in the Spanish government 's approval of subsequent issues .

The situado was discontinued during the 19th century , creating an economic crisis , as a result of Mexico gaining its independence from Spain . Salvador Meléndez Bruna , the colonial governor in office , ordered the issue of provincial banknotes , creating the Puerto Rican peso . However , printing of these banknotes ceased after 1815 . During the following decades , foreign coins became the widespread currency . In the 1860s and 1870s , banknotes reemerged . On February 1 , 1890 , the Banco Español de Puerto Rico was inaugurated and began issuing banknotes . The bank designed four series and placed three in circulation under Spanish rule . In 1895 , a Royal Decree ordered the production of provincial peso coins .

On August 13 , 1898 , the Spanish ? American War ended with Spain ceding Puerto Rico to the United States . The Banco Español de Puerto Rico was renamed Bank of Porto Rico and issued bills equivalent to the United States dollar , creating the Puerto Rican dollar . In 1902 , the First National Bank of Porto Rico issued banknotes in a parallel manner . Two more series were issued until 1913 . After Puerto Rico 's economy and monetary system was fully integrated into the United States ' economic and monetary system , the Puerto Rican dollars were redeemed for those issued by the United States Treasury . The peso and dollar have been followed by other contemporary issues , including commemorative banknotes , private currency , and a quarter coin designed with Fort San Felipe del Morro in the face .

= = Early licenses issued by the Spanish Crown = =

After Juan Ponce de León began the colonization process of Puerto Rico , the archipelago became a strategic military location , used by Spain to protect its colonies and possessions in America . Vessels used it as a main point for resupplying before attempting long voyages and trading became a key part of economy . However , when the mines and rivers in the main island of Puerto Rico , then known as San Juan Bautista , were depleted Puerto Rico began suffering from shortage of gold and its income was reduced drastically , precipitating a recession . Beginning in the 16th century , the Spanish Crown was forced to issue a monetary support decree to the archipelago known as situado , which was supplied by the Royal banks in Central America , particularly Mexico . However , this aid failed to arrive often , contributing to the economical instability . This was exacerbated by other factors , including the costs of running an efficient military and a lack of commercial prosperity . Natural conditions and disasters also contributed , multiplying the costs of maintaining fortresses while hurricanes damaged haciendas , destroying crops and shortening the amount of laborers .

Municipalities suffered most , being forced to implement taxes , including the alcaba del viento (lit . " wind tax ") , which was imposed on foreign suppliers . However , these taxes barely helped , this was because each one had to receive a Royal certification , a bureaucratic procedure which usually lasted several years . Once they reached an established deadline , the process would have to be repeated , taking an extended amount of time . From January 1 , 1636 , to December 15 , 1637 , Philip IV of Spain imposed an obligatory payment to the treasuries in Puerto Rico . The debt was to be paid with currency symbolized by legalized papers bearing a Royal seal . Researchers believe that the use of these documents had an impact in the production of banknotes in Puerto Rico . In due time , these documents would be short in supply upon their arrival , in such cases the

government officials would stamp the current date into old papers . Pedro Tomás de Cordova and Humberto Burzio claim in their research that Puerto Rico was the first place in America to print 8 @-@ real , establishing 1766 as the date for this achievement . Thus , putting Puerto Rico ahead by two decades before Cuba (1781) , Hispaniola (1782) and even Spain (1783) . Both researchers divided the first two types of banknotes issued , the two varieties were classified as " issued " and " printed " . Although both were manufactured using the same method , those referred to as " printed " bore stamps listing numbers and letters . In 1767 , the Spanish Crown approved subsequent issues , conditioning that they should be collected once situado shipped . When this was lacking , paper money was used in a widespread manner throughout the main island . These requirements were met when possible , an example of this was in 1769 , when 88 @,@ 000 banknotes were reclaimed by the authorities .

= = Birth of the Puerto Rican peso = =

In the 19th century , the issuing of situado concluded , with two last deliveries of 500 @,@ 000 and 100 @,@ 000 between 1809 and 1810 . This brought forth a critical economical crisis to Puerto Rico . At the moment , Salvador Meléndez Bruna , the colonial governor in office , ordered the production of provincial paper money . The decree was officially enacted on August 31 , 1812 . These banknotes used the peso being used as equivalent to Spanish reales . Produced by hand , these banknotes featured quantities in the thousands , with 1 peso being worth 8 reales . Mechanical printing had arrived to Puerto Rico years earlier , but up until 1813 , part of the issued notes were being produced by hand and stamped . Between 1812 and 1813 , the tradition of collecting paper money continued , which reduced the amount of surviving banknotes drastically . The other notes printed between 1813 and 1814 , featured a combination of printed types and stamps , the printing was done by Puerto Rico 's National Printing Office and featured patterns to prevent the production of counterfeits . Those featuring denominations in reales , were adorned by Spain 's Royal Seal , with the color varying depending on the date of issue , the 1813 8 @-@ real banknotes featured a lamb on the obverse . However , these security measures were ineffective against counterfeiting , eventually copies of several denominations were circulating in a widespread manner , forcing cities outside of San Juan , Arecibo and Loiza to discontinue their use . Meléndez Bruna decided that the only way to prevent forgery was by asking Spain to produce sealed paper for the printing of the banknotes . The first issue bore the signatures of treasurers or accountants , but this was dropped the subsequent year .

= = End of the Cádiz Constitution = =

On February 11 , 1813 , Alejandro Ramírez arrived to Puerto Rico and almost immediately was named to the office of Intendant , eventually establishing a Consulate of Commerce to control trade in Puerto Rico . Originally from Guatemala , where he had served in various political positions , Ramírez was also a member of the Philadelphia Philosophical Society . The Diario Económico de Puerto Rico , a newspaper specialized in the archipelago 's economy , noted that during the time banknotes of all denominations were still being forged in large quantities . The publication claimed that the counterfeits were most likely produced in other locations of the Caribbean , this was based on the fact that only one royal press existed in Puerto Rico . However , modern researchers maintain that the copies could have been produced locally in a clandestine manner . This is based on a report that emphasizes that the designs of false 8 @-@ real notes were crude and that the ink used spread when touched , something that wouldn 't be possible if produced elsewhere , particularly because the ink would dry in the voyage between countries . During this time , paper notes began disappearing and the stated resorted to renewing old pieces .

In 1814 , Ferdinand VII refused to renew the Spanish Constitution of 1812 , returning the Empire to an absolutist method of government . Consequently , Ramírez contacted some of his allies in Philadelphia and commissioned the production of banknotes in denominations of 3 and 5 reales . The issues were printed by Murray , Draper , Fairham & Company and featured the signatures of

treasurer José Bacener and Ramírez . The designs featured the Spanish Crown and Ferdinand VII 's profile in the two varieties and were numbered manually . No official documentation , letter or decree from the Spanish Crown related to the creation of these notes have surfaced . These issues were collected and destroyed with extreme efficacy in 1866 , leaving only a few dozen intact .

= = Reemergence of paper money = =

The negative perception created by the issue of paper money between 1813 and 1815 , brought the production of banknotes to a halt , while only coins circulated in the archipelago . In 1865 , the Spanish Civil Code was imposed in Puerto Rico . Meanwhile , the Caja de Ahorros was founded in San Juan , a small bank , which provided an annual interest of up to 6 % to its subscribers . The institution was bankrupted in 1879 , but its business model was followed by other banks founded in the southern region of Puerto Rico . The Caja de Ahorros de Ponce (lit . " Ponce Savings Bank ") was founded in 1873 and continued in business until 1879 . The institution issued notes in denominations of 1 , 3 , 5 and 50 pesos which were printed by the P.W. Derhan firm . These bills were only printed in one side and were signed by members of the bank 's board of directors , which was composed by eminent Puerto Rican citizens . These were redeemed mostly in Ponce and co @-@ existed along tokens issued by local business entities .

In 1868 , the Central Republican Board of Cuba and Puerto Rico was founded . The group organized expeditions to Cuba , offering supplies to movements that supported the independence of Puerto Rico and Cuba . Founded by José Francisco Basora , a Puerto Rican revolutionary and friend of Ramón Emeterio Betances , the group had connections within the wealthy sugar industry in the larger antille . Bonds for quantities of 100 , 500 and 1 @,@ 000 pesos were printed between June 1 and November 1 , 1869 , in order to cover the expenses of the two planned revolutions . On August 17 , 1869 , the board issued notes in denominations of 1 , 5 , 10 and 20 pesos , these were produced to establish an affordable alternative to the bonds . All of these issues circulated throughout North and South America as well as the Caribbean . Although they were widespread in the Spanish possessions , their use was kept clandestine to avoid imprisonment by the royal authorities . However , none of them was redeemed due to the failure of the Ten Years ' War and Little War in Cuba . On December 17 , 1866 , Maria Christina of Austria signed a decree which authorized the auctioning of a railroad in Puerto Rico . In 1888 , Ivo Bosch y Puig , an engineer from Catalonia , received the concession to put the project in march . In Madrid , Bosch y Puig established the Compañía de los Ferrocarriles de Puerto Rico (lit . " Puerto Rico Railroad Company ") . During this decade , Charles Skipper and East produced 5 @-@ peso banknotes in England , which were circulated after receiving the signatures of Bosch y Puig and an unidentified associate .

= = The provincial coin = = =

Due to its strategic location , currencies from several countries began circulating in Puerto Rico and used as trade . The government often ordered the collection of these coins in exchange for exchange notes . The first of these took place in 1857 , when a royal decree ordered the gathering of macuquina coins . These arrived to Puerto Rico in 1813 , originally produced by Spain in Venezuela . Due to Spanish manufacture , the exchange notes issued for the macuquina featured a 12 @.@ 5 % discount , which left a significant deficit in the government 's budget . A decade later , coins were brought from the Dominican Republic to Puerto Rico . Consequently , the distribution of foreign coins received authorization . In 1879 , the circulation of Mexican silver was approved in government and official entities , eventually allowing public distribution in 1881 . However , some saw an opportunity for profit in this and bought Mexican pesos outside of Puerto Rico before importing them , in the process gaining a profit of up to 40 centavos per peso . In 1884 , a number of different coins were countermarked with a fleur @-@ de @-@ lis for circulation on Puerto Rico . Spanish 2 , 4 and 8 reales , and 5 and 10 centimos , United States ' 20 cents , quarters , halves and dollars were all countermarked and used until they were redeemed in 1894 . By 1895 , the coins circulating in Puerto Rico were mostly Mexican silver , creating a shortage of currency . To resolve

this , Spain issued a Royal Decree stating that the Mexican coins were to be replaced by ones minted in Madrid , with special coins created exclusively for Puerto Rico . To execute this move , exchange notes in one @-@ peso denomination were created . Once the exchange concluded in 1896 , the provincial coin was already in circulation . Silver 20 centavos and 1 peso coins were introduced in 1895 , followed in 1896 by silver 5 , 10 and 40 centavos . The 1 peso coins bore the denomination as " 1 PESO = 5 P.TAS " . These exchanges heavily affected the government 's economy . Some years later , Ceredo Millán a commercial firm in San Juan obtained some of the now @-@ obsolete Exchange Notes , which were converted into souvenirs and offered as gifts to their clients .

= = Banco Español de Puerto Rico = =

On May 23 , 1887 , Maria Christina of Austria and Victor Balaguer , Spain 's Overseas Minister , signed a royal decree proposing the creation of a royal bank in Puerto Rico . A waiting period of three months was imposed to those interested in pursuing the project , who had to present a business proposal as dictated by the order . Two proposals were formally presented and taken under consideration . One of these , was presented by the Sociedad Anónima de Crédito Mercantil de Puerto Rico (lit . " Puerto Rico Mercantile Credit Company ") , which was represented by Manuel Vicente Rodríguez , Enrique Vijande , Guillermo Mullenhoff , Pablo Ubarri Capetillo and José Caldas , with all of them serving as the group 's directors . The other one was presented by a coalition of French and Spanish bankers . The proposal which bore the signature of Francisco Lastres and Eulogio Despujols , who acted as their representatives , was ultimately accepted .

On May 5 , 1888 , a second royal decree was issue , officializing the creation of the Banco Español de Puerto Rico , which received a charter validity of 25 years . This grant of authority was awarded to Enrique Vijande y Loredo , José Caldas y Caldas and Pablo Ubarri , the members composing this partnership . The bank wasn 't established immediately , this was because the currency being used in Puerto Rico was Mexican silver , which created problems and delayed the establishment date until early 1890 . Until this point , the Sociedad Anónima de Crédito Mercantil de Puerto Rico continued in service , before disappearing in April .

During this timeframe , they produced 100 @-@ peso banknotes featuring the lamb , Puerto Rico 's official emblem . The bank was inaugurated on February 1 , 1890 , with Juan Róspide y Navarro and José Manuel López Sainz as governor and vice governor respectively . The Royal Decree permitted the issuing of paper money in denominations of 5 , 10 , 20 , 50 , 100 and 200 pesos . These banknotes were manufactured by the American Bank Note Company . The original bank was located in San Juan , with a second one being established in Mayagüez in 1894 . Until 1898 , the institution issued four series A , B , C and D , though apparently C was put into production after D and didn 't circulate under Spanish control . Series D began distribution on December 1 , 1894 ; this became the first time that the lamb , which had continued being used since the days of the Sociedad Anónima de Crédito Mercantil de Puerto Rico , was replaced by the profile of Maria Christina of Austria . The Ministerio de Ultramar issued 1 peso notes in 1895 .

= = American invasion and decline = = =

On August 13 , 1898 , Spain ceded Puerto Rico to the United States as part of the Treaty of Paris , bringing the Puerto Rican Campaign to an end . The Banco Español de Puerto Rico was then transferred to invading investors . However , the terms signed in the armistice , stated that the United States would have to respect all the charters that were previously granted by Spain to its former colonies . This was certified by the United States Congress on June 6 , 1900 . Thus , the bank continued issuing provincial currency in Puerto Rico , but was renamed El Banco de Puerto Rico or Bank of Puerto Rico . The capital used by the currency was changed from peso to dollars , giving birth to the Puerto Rican dollar . A proposal to print 1 @-@ dollar banknotes was suggested , but refused citing that it could " bring dangerous results " . Series C bills were issued with a release date of " May 1 , 1900 " and were over stamped with " Moneda Americana " in bold red letters . They

bore the signatures of the new bank governor Carlos María Soler and cashier Manuel Vicente . This marked the first and only time that currency valorized in dollars was issued outside the United States .

Series E was introduced subsequently . The banknotes for this issue were bilingual , featuring the bank 's name both in Spanish and English . Early specimens for Series F were produced in 1907 , but they never reached circulation . The bills for this issue featured the profiles of Christopher Columbus and Juan Ponce de León . The colonial government intended to eliminate all Spanish captions from these notes , intending to accelerate a failed " Americanization " process in Puerto Rico . Series F ultimately entered circulation on July 1 , 1909 , still featuring bilingual captions and exhibiting a higher degree of technical quality . In 1913 , the charter granted by Spain expired and the bank was closed and its assets were liquidated . After this date , Puerto Rico 's economy was fully integrated into the United States ' currency system , while Puerto Rican dollars were redeemed for United States dollars . Banknotes valorized in millions continued in circulation , thus a collect was ordered and held between January 16 ? 24 , 1916 . The remaining bills , with an estimated value of \$ 14 @, @ 872 were taken out of circulation nine years later by the Puerto Rico Commercial Bank .

Parallel to the Bank of Puerto Rico , American investors saw an opportunity to establish banks in Puerto Rico . The first of these was the American Colonial Bank , which opened in 1899 . The establishment of national banks was proposed to the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency , with charters being eventually established in June 1900 . The requirements for establishing a bank under this grant of authority , demanded that at least three @-@ fourths of the board of directors lived in Puerto Rico at least for a year . It took the group two years to meet these regulations , but in 1902 the First National Bank of Porto Rico was inaugurated , with Andrés Crosas from San Juan serving as its president . The bank began issuing notes in denominations of 10 , 20 , 50 and 100 dollars which were manufactured by October 27 , 1902 , even before all of the requirements were met .

= = Collection value and numismatic study = =

The remaining exemplars of Puerto Rican currency have gathered significant value with the years , particularly in the United States . The value of them within the collectors of that country is due to the special nature of the post @-@ 1898 issues . Since they were issued under the same Spanish provincial charter , the Bureau of Engraving and Printing classifies them as " territorial " currency , this being the only unit of exchange of this kind that is recognized by the United States Department of the Treasury .

Objects from Puerto Rico are constantly featured in specialized magazines , in both national and international distribution . The Puerto Rican dollars that were collected by the government , were burned between January 16 ? 24 , 1925 , drastically reducing the amount of surviving notes from the Bank of Puerto Rico . The Great Depression reduced their numbers further , since necessity prevented the collection of pesos in large denominations . Thus less than five exemplars are known to exist of the 100 and 200 peso banknotes issued by El Banco Español de Puerto Rico and the 5 and 10 dollars Series F bills published by the Bank of Puerto Rico .

Similarly , the other notes issued by this banks range from scarce to rare . The banknotes from the First National Bank of Porto Rico are particularly scarce , this is because the institution 's issues didn 't even reach quantities of 20 . Only two bills from the \$ 100 denomination have been known to survive , similarly two from the \$ 20 issue are left , with one of them being acquired by Amon G. Carter before his death . Carter was known to exhibit the piece , but didn 't make it available for sale . More than a dozen \$ 10 banknotes survived , seldom appearing at auctions . Other extremely rare banknotes include the 2 and 4 real notes of 1813 and all of the denominations issued by the Caja de Ahorros de Ponce . In contrast , the paper money used by the Puerto Rico Railroad Company is still known to appear occasionally in the market . Outside of these , the clandestine bills issued by the Central Republican Board of Cuba and Puerto Rico , range from scarce (5 @-@ peso bill) to extremely rare (20 @-@ peso notes) .

In Puerto Rico , the Sociedad Numismática de Puerto Rico (lit . " Numismatic Society of Puerto Rico ") was founded in 1949 . The society is usually composed of 25 to 50 members and it focuses

in collecting and distributing both coins and banknotes from Puerto Rico to interested collectors . An annual exhibition along the Sociedad Filatelica de Puerto Rico (lit . " Philatelic Society of Puerto Rico ") has been held in Plaza Las Américas since the commercial center 's inauguration . Outside of this activity , Puerto Rican currency can be found locally in philatelic and numismatic as well as flea markets . At auctions , banknotes have been known to surpass bid that are up to 70 @,@ 000 dollars . The collection of cardboard samples given by banks to numismatic merchants , has also been noted among enthusiasts .

= = Other issued currency = =

In 2005 , the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party issued a limited amount of banknotes commemorating the Jayuya Uprising . The series included pesos of six denominations , including \$ 1 , \$ 5 , \$ 10 , \$ 20 , \$ 50 and \$ 100 bills . The designs of all banknotes feature Pedro Albizu Campos in the front side while the reverses are adorned with the flags of Puerto Rico , Jayuya and the Nationalist Party . Microprint with the names of Pedro Albizu Campos and Filiberto Ojeda Ríos are found throughout the pesos . On July 10 , 2005 , Liberty Dollar of Puerto Rico was created by Alfredo Pacheco Martínez . Silver ounces began circulating on October 8 , 2005 , marking the first time that a silver coin was distributed in more than a century . After an intervention with parent company Liberty Services concluded with its assets being confiscated , leading to a process that resulted in the indictment and conviction of founder Bernard von NotHaus , Pacheco Martínez continued to circulate the coins under the name of Dólar Boricua . In August 2010 , he was also indicted on the same charges faced by Von NotHaus . Pacheco Martínez was found guilty on June 29 , 2012 , being subsequently sentenced to 19 years in prison .

In December 2007 , the United States Congress approved a measure that included the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico , Washington D.C. and several non @-@ autonomous territories including American Samoa , Guam and the United States Virgin Islands in the 50 State Quarters program . Both commonwealths and territories were excluded from the original program approved in 1998 , which was followed by almost ten years of lobbying before they were included . The design on these coins was expected to feature the same George Washington image found in the obverse of the original issues , while the reverse would depict illustrations of something characteristic to that location . The Secretary of Treasury approved the design on July 31 , 2008 . The coins were issued , as well as " proof coins " and 90 % silver special issues . The Puerto Rico coin was the second release in 2009 . In 2012 , as part of the National Park Quarters Program initiative , the United States Mint will release a quarter commemorating the inclusion of El Yunque National Forest as part of the National Forest System in 1903 .