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# Political Status of Puerto Rico: Options for Congress

**R. Sam Garrett**  
Specialist in American National Government

June 7, 2011

**Congressional Research Service**

7-5700

[www.crs.gov](http://www.crs.gov)

RL32933

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**CRS Report for Congress**  
*Prepared for Members and Committees of Congress*

## Appendix B. Puerto Rico Status Votes in Plebiscites and Referenda, 1967-1998

**Table B-I. Puerto Rico Status Votes in Plebiscites and Referenda, 1967-1998**

Ballot Options	Votes	
	Number <sup>a</sup>	Percent <sup>b</sup>
<b>July 23, 1967<sup>c</sup></b>		
Commonwealth <sup>d</sup>	425,079	60.5%
Statehood	273,315	38.9%
Independence	4,118	0.6%
Registered voters	1,067,000	
Total votes	702,512	
Percent turnout	66%	
<b>December 8, 1991<sup>e</sup></b>		
Against the reclamation of democratic rights (No)	660,267	53.6%
In favor of the reclamation of democratic rights (Yes)	559,163	45.4%
Registered voters	2,052,537	
Total votes	1,219,430	
Percent turnout	59%	
<b>November 14, 1993<sup>f</sup></b>		
Commonwealth <sup>g</sup>	826,326	48.6%
Statehood	788,296	46.4%
Independence	75,620	4.4%
Registered voters	2,100,000	
Total votes	1,700,000	
Percent turnout	81%	
<b>December 13, 1998<sup>h</sup></b>		
None of the above [option five]	787,900	50.3%
Statehood [option three]	728,157	46.6%
Sovereignty [option four, independence]	39,838	2.6%
Free association [option two]	4,536	0.3%
Limited self-government [option one] <sup>i</sup>	993	0.1%
Registered voters	2,197,824	
Total votes	1,561,424	
Percent turnout	71%	

a. Table excludes blank or null and void ballots.

- b. Number of registered voters, total votes, and percent turnout derived from sources of results (noted below), except for registered voters in 1991 calculated by CRS.
- c. Number of votes for independence calculated by CRS based on data presented in: Arturo Morales Carrion, *Puerto Rico: A Political and Cultural History*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1983), p. 306. [Total number of registered voters was 1,067,000, according to Surendra Bhana, *The United States and the Development of the Puerto Rican Status Question, 1936-1968*, (Lawrence, KS: The University Press of Kansas, 1975), p. 185.] See also Roberta A. Johnson, "The 1967 Puerto Rican Plebiscite: The People Decide," *Revista/Review InterAmericana*, vol. 5, spring 1975, pp. 27-46.
- d. The votes in favor of the 1967 Commonwealth option arguably demonstrated support for an expanded form of self-government for Puerto Rico, in that the ballot proposition included text referring to the "inviolability" and "indissoluble link" of Puerto Rican citizenship and would have required approval of changes in the political status in a referendum.
- e. Results taken from Representative Robert J. Lagomarsino, "Certification of Puerto Rico Referendum Results," remarks in the House, *Congressional Record*, vol. 138, Feb. 7, 1992, p. 2141. A "yes" vote, generally urged by commonwealth and independence supporters, expressed support for legislation that would have amended the Constitution to support the right of Puerto Ricans to determine a political status not subordinated to Congress and respective of the unique culture and identity of Puerto Rico. A "no" vote, generally urged by statehood supporters, rejected the proposed constitutional amendment.
- f. Results taken from Ivonne Garcia, "Final Status Plebiscite Results Released," *San Juan Star*, Dec. 10, 1993, p. 12.
- g. The text of the ballot for the "Commonwealth" option in 1993 included provisions that arguably exceeded the relationship established in 1950, included "irrevocable U.S. citizenship," "fiscal autonomy for Puerto Rico," and a legislative agenda to be considered by Congress.
- h. Results taken from U.S. Congress, House Committee on Resources, *The Results of the 1998 Puerto Rico Plebiscite*, committee print, 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> session (Washington: GPO, 1999), p. 10.
- i. The text of the ballot arguably presented the commonwealth option in that it referred to the political status set forth in P.L. 600, the plenary authority of the Congress in the territorial clause of the U.S. Constitution, and other characteristics generally associated with the political status of Puerto Rico.