

Puerto Rico’s Only Legally & Constitutionally Viable Political Status Options

	U.S. Territory	U.S. State	Sovereign Nation	Sovereign Nation in Free Association with the U.S
Examples	Puerto Rico, Guam, USVI, American Samoa & Northern Mariana Islands	Any of the 50 states	Any of the 180+ members of the United Nations	Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Palau, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) <i>*These nations are also members of the U.N.</i>
Governing arrangement with the U.S.	The Territory Clause of the Constitution grants Congress “[p]ower to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the U.S.”	The 10 th Amendment provides that “powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.”	Bilateral international agreements (treaties) that either nation can modify and unilaterally withdraw from.	Bilateral international agreements (compacts) that either nation can modify and unilaterally withdraw from.
U.S. citizenship	Yes (except for American Samoa)	Yes	No	No
Voting Representation in the U.S. Congress	No. One non-voting delegate or Resident Commissioner.	Yes. Two U.S. Senators & a proportional number of U.S. Representatives.	No	No
Eligibility for Federal Programs	Yes. Often but not always, and less generous than in the states.	Yes. U.S. citizens living in states have equal rights and equal responsibilities.	No	Extremely limited. Current programs are scheduled to expire in 2023 (RMI, FSM) or 2024 (Palau).
National Security	U.S. jurisdiction	U.S. jurisdiction	Independent from the U.S.	The U.S. controls the land, water and air rights of the three Freely Associated States, controlling access of any nation to this geopolitically sensitive area in the Pacific. U.S. also has authority to build out military presence, including military facilities.