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Reporting Accurate and Objective Information Based on Facts, not Agenda-Setting Theories

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Puerto Rico

A Tropical Paradise with a Treasure Chest of ID Fraud

What if you learned that your state was so engulfed with ID fraud that the federal government's solution was to ***void every birth certificate issued before July 1, 2010?***

Impossible? No. In fact, this is what has occurred in the U.S. territory aka Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The Spanish tropical paradise with less than [four million](#) in population is so saturated with ID fraud that the document confirming one's birth is [officially declared void!](#)

Puerto Rico is comprised of [six islands](#) located one thousand miles southeast of Miami and [is the size of Connecticut](#). As the Caribbean's economic shining star, Puerto Rico is a tourist destination.

The deepest spot in the Atlantic Ocean called [The Puerto Rico Trench](#) is north of San Juan. Puerto Rico's tourism highlights the [El Yunque](#) as the only tropical rain forest in the USA, the [Arecibo Conservatory](#) which has the largest radio radar telescope on earth and caves that are forty-five million years old. Yet the key industry is not tourism, but pharmaceutical manufacturing which [produces 50% of the prescription drugs in the United States](#). Medical devices such as hearing aids and pacemakers are also produced.

The location along the Mona Passage is a key [shipping route](#) to the Panama Canal and connects the Atlantic Ocean to the Caribbean Sea between Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. Because there is [no requirement for customs inspections](#) when traveling to the states, Puerto Rico has become a *'trans-shipment point'* for drug smugglers and presents a major problem. Trans-shipment points save the terminal costs of loading and unloading from one form of transportation to another, thus helping harbors to become important economic centers. San Juan, the capital of Puerto Rico has one of the largest 'natural' harbors in the Caribbean and the [most population](#) of the seventy-eight municipalities. The transnational migration, national identity and the Caribbean/Puerto Rican culture of the Latinos in America were researched by Jorge Duany, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Puerto Rico.

"Over the past few decades, Puerto Rico has become a nation on the move through [the relocation of almost half of its population to the United States](#) and the continuing flow of people between the island and the mainland." "Such dizzying [nomadism](#) - a constant dislocation and relocation of peoples, practices, imaginaries and identities- has been postmodern age." (Chambers, 1994.) and author of Paesaggi Migratori aka Landscapes Migration. Culture and identity post-colonial era (The Melusine).

The black market actively sells stolen birth certificates for [\\$10,000 each](#). Those who were born in Puerto Rico with a Hispanic name are key targets. With the stolen birth certificates, documents such as passports, licenses, government documents that would reap financial benefits and other official records

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within the private sector, many are at risk for identity theft and fraud. United States passports, social security benefits and other federal services become 'rewards' for those using illegal documentation.

Because of the national security risks, Puerto Rico, which is a U.S. territory and under the jurisdiction of the U.S. President, collaborated with the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to help eliminate the fraud? A US Department of State study found that 40% of fraudulent [American passport applications](#) made with birth certificates involved documents from Puerto Rico.

The Puerto Rico [Birth Certificate Law 191 of 2009](#) originated and was amended in June 2010.

[VitalCheck](#) has a 24/7 bilingual call center (866) 842-6765 which allows one to order their birth certificate. There is an additional express processing and shipping cost. If you choose to order your birth certificate online, the government of Puerto Rico has an [online application](#). If you were born in Puerto Rico and presently reside in the USA, you [can apply by mail](#).

Professor Jorge Duany states, "*Today, nearly half of all persons of Puerto Rican origin live in the continental United States.*" Puerto Rico is ([la nació'n en vaive'n](#)) the nation on the move.

Suggested Additional Reading:

[United States Council for Puerto Rico Statehood](#)

[Puerto Rico Birth Certificates Issued before July 1, 2010 Declared Void](#)

[Validity of Birth Certificates extended until October 30](#)

[Senate Bill No. 1182](#)

[PRFAA](#) | Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration