

Relentlessly Moving the Needle

For 28 years, the Center for a New Economy has conducted rigorous research, proposed evidence-based solutions, and made its case where decisions are made.

Our impact is possible because: 1) we take our proposals directly to those who can turn them into public policy, 2) bring together stakeholders from different sectors, and 3) create spaces for dialogue. We sit at the table with everyone who wants to help change the course of Puerto Rico's economy.

None of this would have been possible without you.

CNE does not receive government funding. Every study, every roundtable, and every meeting with legislators, organizations, communities, and individuals was funded by contributions from people who believe in Puerto Rico and from allies who trust our independence of judgment.

This year, CNE charted a roadmap to strategically achieve Puerto Rico's economic development. CNE:

- proposed a locally designed fiscal health framework to put us on a stronger fiscal path;
- mapped the economic capabilities of what the island already produces, revealing where we can build on our strengths;
- advocated for creation of the Puerto Rico Economic Development Fund for the 21st Century to invest in our future;
- kept the pressure on to confront Puerto Rico's energy crisis, a central issue that directly affects our ability to grow, invest, and create opportunity.

And we launched something new.

Artificial intelligence grows every day, but the future we want is *ours* to decide: the ***humans*** who live it. So, we created **DEME: Debí Estudiar Más Economía**, our most ambitious effort to bring the economy into the conversation and make it accessible to people across the island.

I am grateful to my great team that works every day for a better Puerto Rico, and to you, our reader, for believing, as we do, that a new economy **is possible**.

Rosanna Torres Pizarro
President
Center for a New Economy

CNE is guided by a mission.
And that mission is Puerto Rico.



What is DEME?

In 2026, CNE launched **DEME: Debí Estudiar Más Economía**, the first in a series of events that explains, in plain language and with concrete examples, some of the issues that will define the island's economic future. The inaugural edition sold out and brought together 268 people. Platea's recap video surpassed 21,500 views on Instagram, and after the event, our social media following grew by 64%.

WHAT'S NEXT

DEME is a series

In 2027, CNE will produce new events on the core issues of its agenda, taking the evidence beyond technical reports and bringing it closer to those who vote, start businesses, and make decisions.

Watch the Debí Estudiar Más Economía recap on economic complexity.

It's three minutes long. We promise it's worth it.



Lunch with economists from different generations and from across the island.

How Do We Grow the Economy?

For years, sustained growth in Puerto Rico has been a topic of diagnosis and discussion. Drawing on decades of research, public policy analysis, and relationships of trust across every sector, CNE is convening and leading roundtables to build the discipline and conviction needed to set our future firmly on course.

To make it happen, **in 2026 CNE developed a roadmap built around three key areas for Puerto Rico's economic growth:**

FISCAL HEALTH

Where do we stand?

CNE PROPOSED

the adoption of a locally designed fiscal rule to strengthen institutional capacity.

RUM COVER-OVER

How do we pay for what comes next?

CNE ADVOCATED FOR

the Puerto Rico Economic Development Fund for the 21st Century, investing new revenue from the rum excise tax cover-over to drive sustainable innovation in Puerto Rico.

ECONOMIC COMPLEXITY

What are we good at?

CNE PRESENTED

a map of the products manufactured and exported from Puerto Rico at several forums, trainings, and roundtables with the private sector.

Before we talk about growth, there's an issue no one can ignore: **energy.**

No development strategy works on an unstable power grid: energy remains Puerto Rico's most urgent challenge. Nine years after PREPA's bankruptcy proceeding began under Title III of PROMESA, the Financial Oversight and Management Board and PREPA's main creditor groups have yet to reach an agreement. The stakes are high. The outcome of this case will determine the island's electricity rates, our ability to attract private investment in renewable energy, and the long-term viability of the grid itself. That's why, in 2026, CNE kept the issue at the center of the public conversation.

In 2026, we advocated above all for ending PREPA's bankruptcy and increasing investment in renewable energy:


MIÉRCOLES
OPINIÓN/29
EL NUEVO DÍA

Título III y AEE: un equilibrio complejo

PUNTO DE VISTA

Sergio Marxuach

MARCH 25, 2026

"PREPA Title III: Threading the Needle"

Without an agreement on PREPA's restructuring, access to new capital remains limited and the entire system suffers.


OPINIÓN

PUNTO DE VISTA

SERGIO MARXUACH

OPINIÓN

El momento de la energía renovable a escala

Energía más barata genera mayor inversión y actividad económica, escribe Sergio M. Marxuach

MAY 28, 2026

"Now Is the Time for Utility-Scale Renewable Energy"

Cheaper energy generates more investment and economic activity.


OPINIÓN

PUNTO DE VISTA

SERGIO MARXUACH

OPINIÓN

La abundancia que no estamos aprovechando

La crisis del estrecho de Ormuz demostró que depender de combustibles importados no es solo un problema económico sino una vulnerabilidad estratégica, escribe Sergio Marxuach

SEPTEMBER 2, 2026

"The Abundance We're Not Tapping"

The Strait of Hormuz crisis showed that dependence on imported fuel is also a strategic vulnerability.

CNE will keep pressing to achieve these goals.

The next edition of the CNE Review will be devoted entirely to energy, with the in-depth analysis the issue demands and key proposals to lower costs and improve the system.

+ FISCAL HEALTH

Where Do We Stand?

As PROMESA turned 10, CNE raised an uncomfortable question: what happens the morning after?

CNE's answer has been consistent: our fiscal problems will not be solved by new boards or more outside consultants, but by better governance: how revenue is collected, how spending is controlled over the long term, how internal processes are managed, and how our institutions' performance is improved.

The real challenge is not to keep passing reforms, but to build the institutional capacity to carry them out.


Más vale maña que fuerza

PUNTO DE VISTA

Rosanna Torres Pizarro

El Nuevo Día · June 25, 2026



- **CNE proposed fiscal rules in 2016.** Today, we continue to argue that Puerto Rico needs to save and prepare in good times, protect investment in bad times, and avoid overspending in election years.
- **CNE focused on public servants.** They are often singled out as part of the problem. CNE sees them as part of the solution: they know where the system breaks down, they hold its institutional memory, and they want their experience to count. So that this experience can help implement structural reforms, we provided information and training to key staff at the Department of Economic Development and Commerce (DDEC), the Office of Management and Budget (OGP), Invest Puerto Rico, the Minimum Wage Commission, and the Oversight Board.

+ RUM COVER-OVER

How Do We Pay for What Comes Next?

In 2026, the amount Puerto Rico receives from the federal rum excise tax cover-over increased. It is new money, and what the island does with it could define its future.

CNE proposed investing it rather than spending it on immediate needs.

CNE'S PROPOSAL

Puerto Rico Economic Development Fund for the 21st Century

A fund to drive the investments Puerto Rico will need in the decades ahead.

CNE published the study behind the Fund.

CNE met with key legislators.

CNE presented the proposal to the Oversight Board.



+ ECONOMIC COMPLEXITY

What Are We Good At?

What the island produces today reveals what it could produce competitively tomorrow.

GDP tells us how much an economy produces. Economic complexity tells us what it produces and how sophisticated that production is. Using global trade data, **CNE mapped what Puerto Rico exports, how complex it is, and how close it is to the capabilities the island already has.** That map points to new areas where the island can compete and lays the foundation for an evidence-based economic development strategy.

What CNE did in 2026

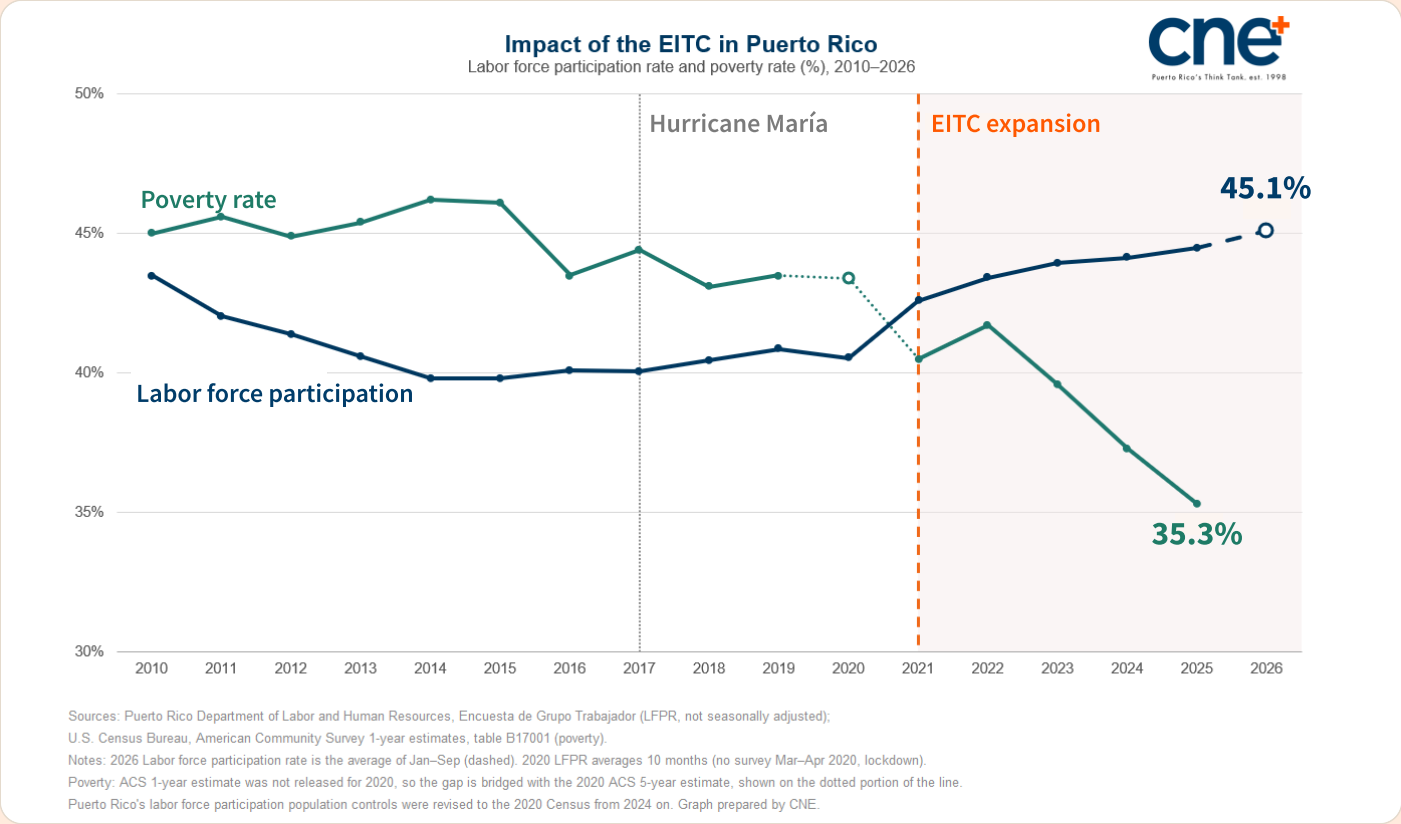
+ **Presented the economic complexity model** and published the study with Puerto Rico's product space map.
+ **Trained private sector participants** to use this tool.
+ **Trained DDEC officials**, who design the government's economic development strategy.
+ **Convened the Conversatorio CNE and several roundtables** with the private sector to discuss the findings.
+ **Presented the study at Debí Estudiar Más Economía**, bringing it to a broad and diverse audience.

+ INVESTING IN CNE DRIVES SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Why This Work Pays Off

Puerto Rico's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) shows that well-designed public policy can transform lives, even if it takes time. CNE published the first study on this credit in 2003. After years of advocacy by CNE and its allies in Puerto Rico and in Washington, in 2021 Congress allocated $600 million a year for Puerto Rico's EITC and included language drafted by CNE in the American Rescue Plan. Today, more than 600,000 families benefit every year, and more than $1 billion goes into the pockets of low-income workers. Since 2020, more than 139,000 people have joined the labor force, and there are 194,000 fewer people living in poverty. It's moving the needle.

The data speak for themselves:



What sets CNE apart is that we work to achieve systemic, lasting change that reaches hundreds of thousands of families, especially the most vulnerable. Organizations that provide direct services are absolutely indispensable, and CNE complements them by achieving the structural transformations that allow those services to go further.

In 2027

These are our priorities as we continue turning proposals into results:

Advance the conversation within government.

Build recognition of and processes for complying with fiscal rules, advocate for the approval of the PR Economic Development Fund, and offer solutions for the different areas that affect the cost of energy.

Strengthen strategic partnerships.

With the private sector, trade associations, academia, and government, so that every proposal reaches the table with allies who back it.

Keep strengthening our communications.

Through our Debí Estudiar Más Economía event series and the CNE Review, and by bringing our evidence-based proposals to more people through social and traditional media.

None of this happens without you.

If you've read this far, it's because you care about Puerto Rico too.

The impact of the EITC shows what we can achieve when we focus on systemic change.

Change is possible. Your contribution decides how fast we get there.



Join CNE's work

grupocne.org/donate

Every contribution, large or small, keeps the needle moving.

cne+

Puerto Rico's Think Tank, est. 1998