

The Wisconsin Rural Economy

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Long-Term Perspective

To think about where the economy is going, we need to understand how we got to where we are today.

COVID-19 and the Economy

With one year of data (2020) what can we see.



What do we mean by “rural”? In the eye of the beholder?

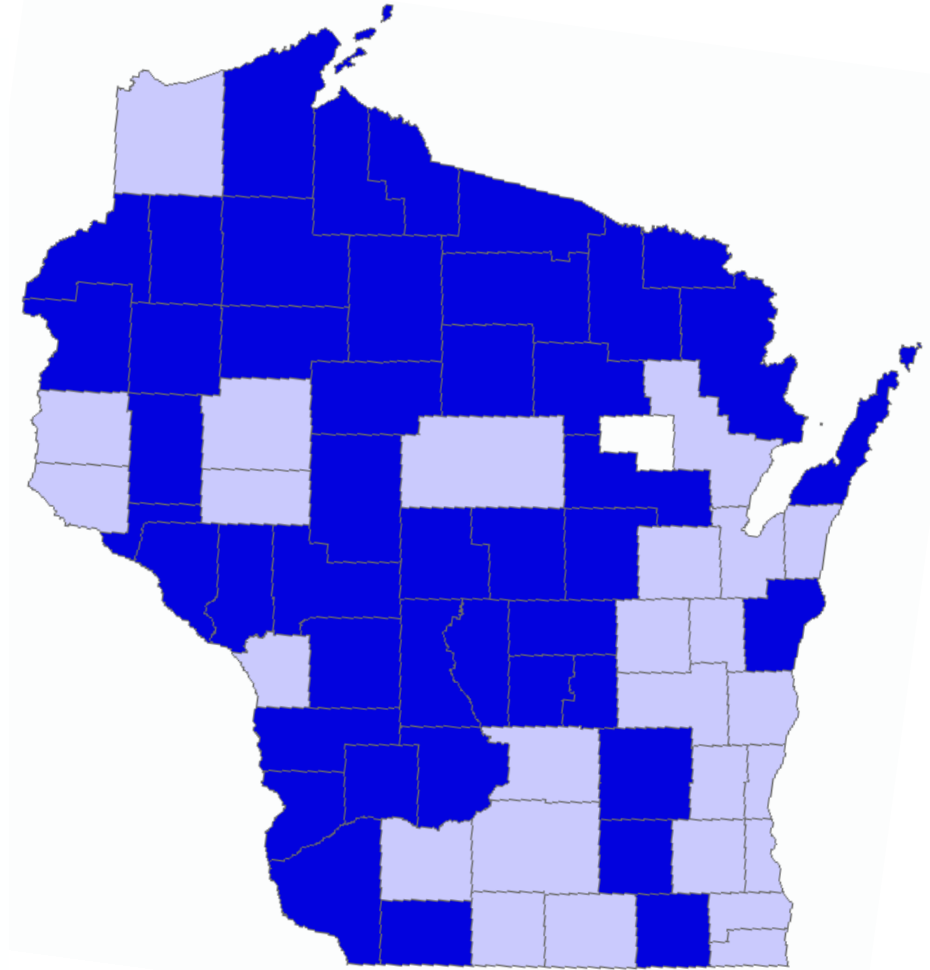
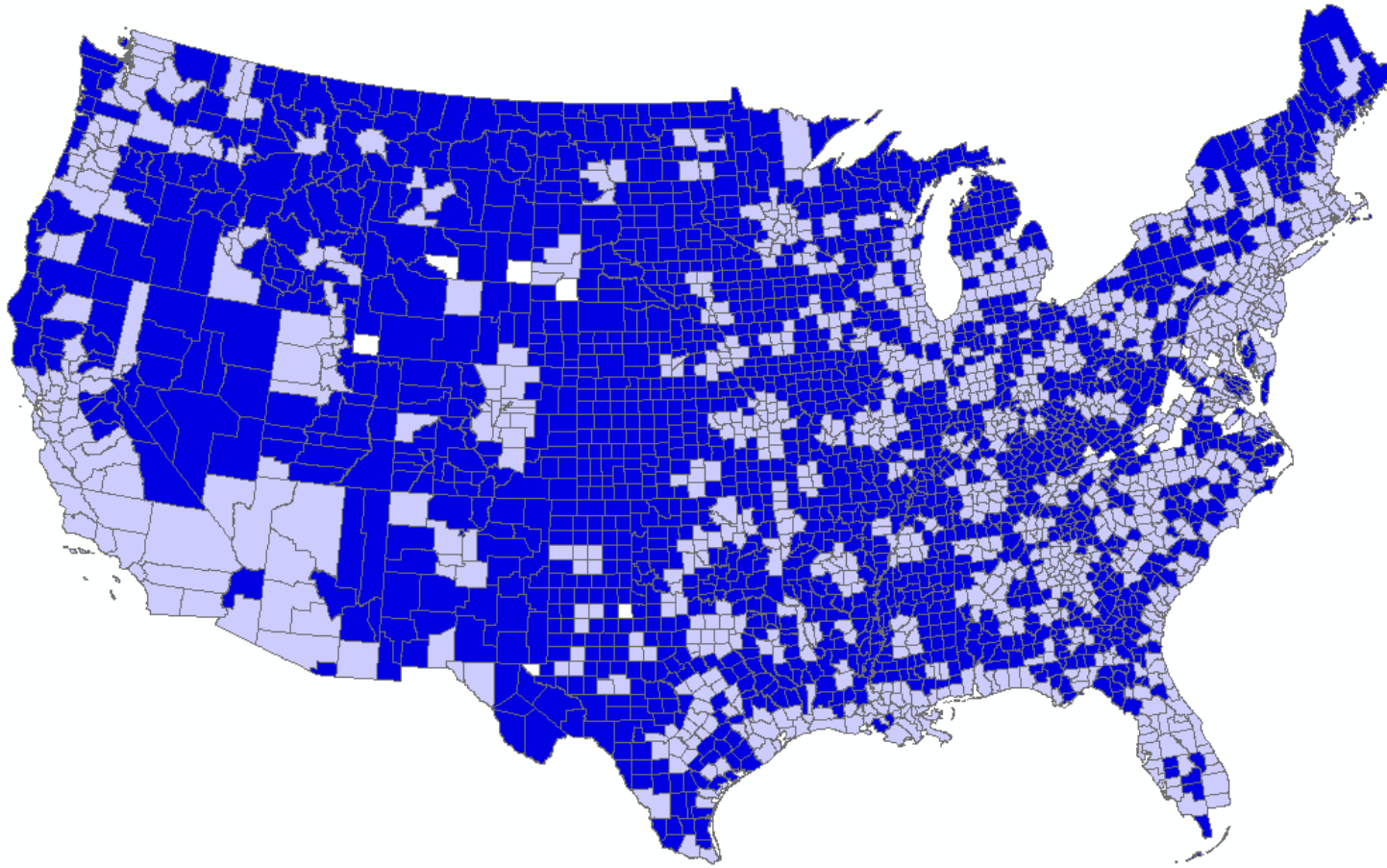
Nonmetropolitan: counties that are not classified as metropolitan.

“Metropolitan [statistical] areas are standardized county or equivalent-based areas having at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more population, plus adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core, as measured by commuting ties.”

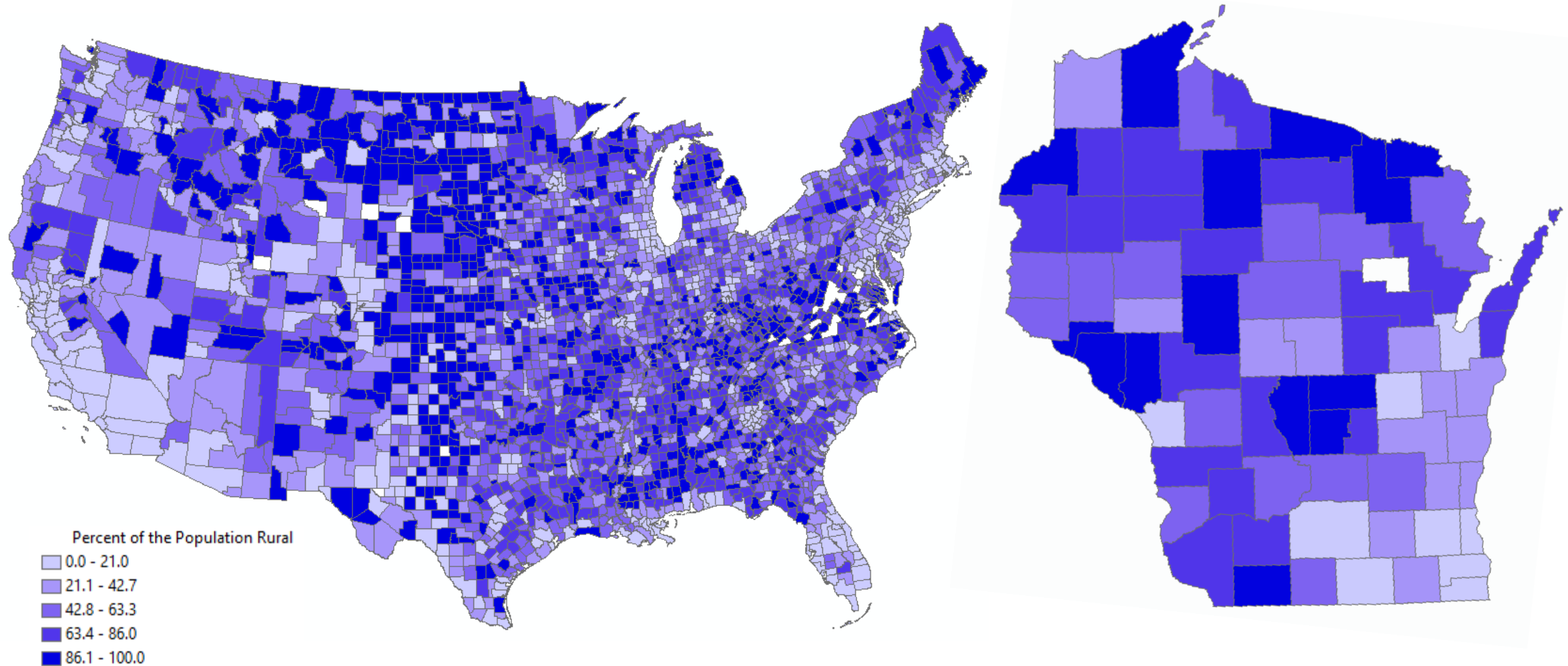
If 25% or more of the labor force commutes to the core, the county is included in the metropolitan area.



OMB: Nonmetropolitan



Census: Percent of the Population “Rural”

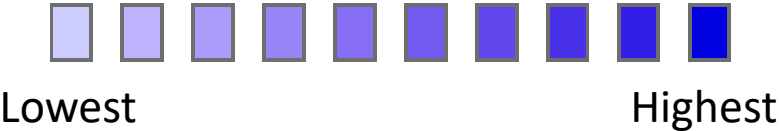
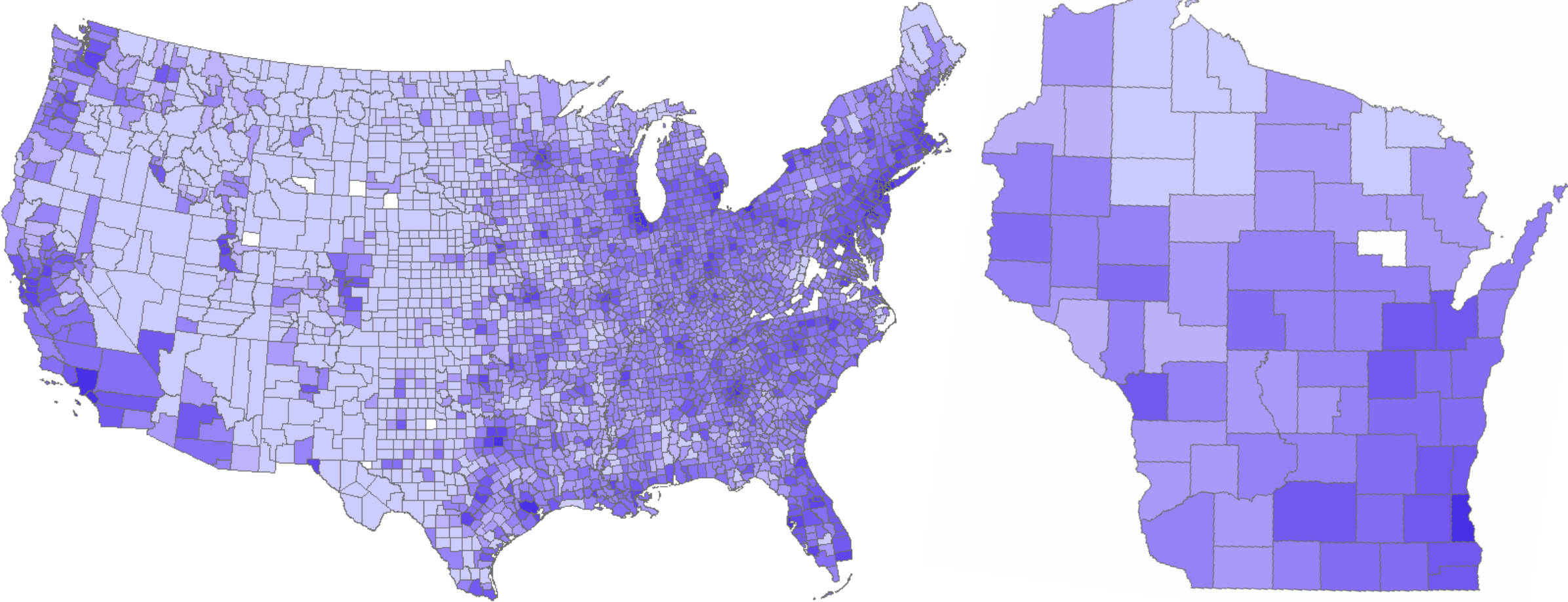


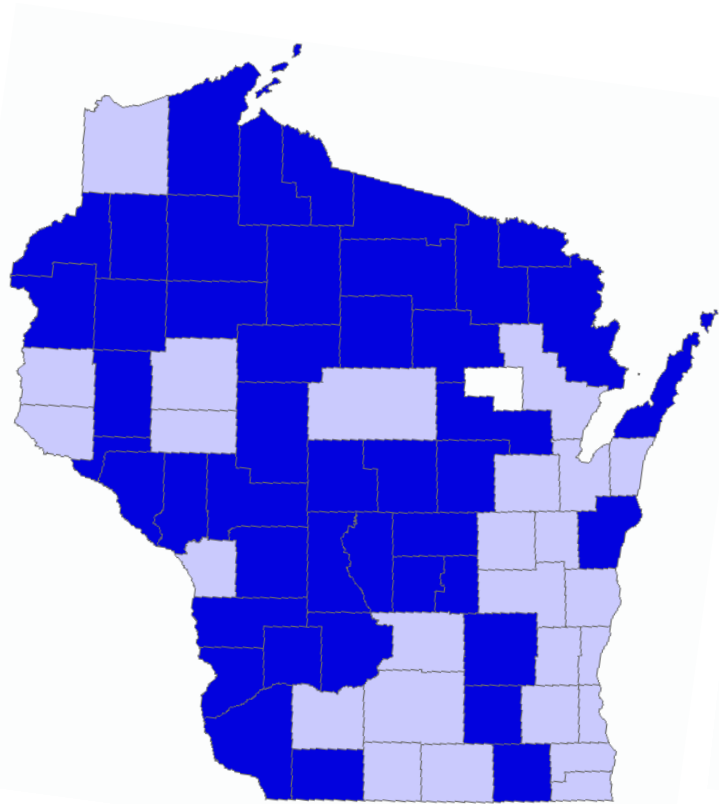
A place is “rural” if population is less than 2,500.



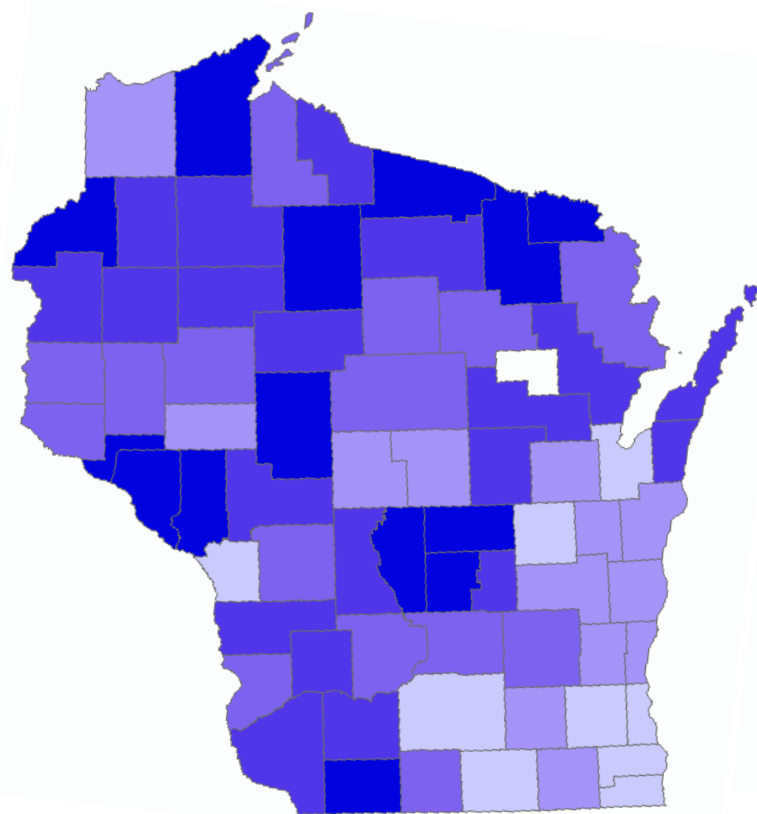
Population Density

(people per square mile)

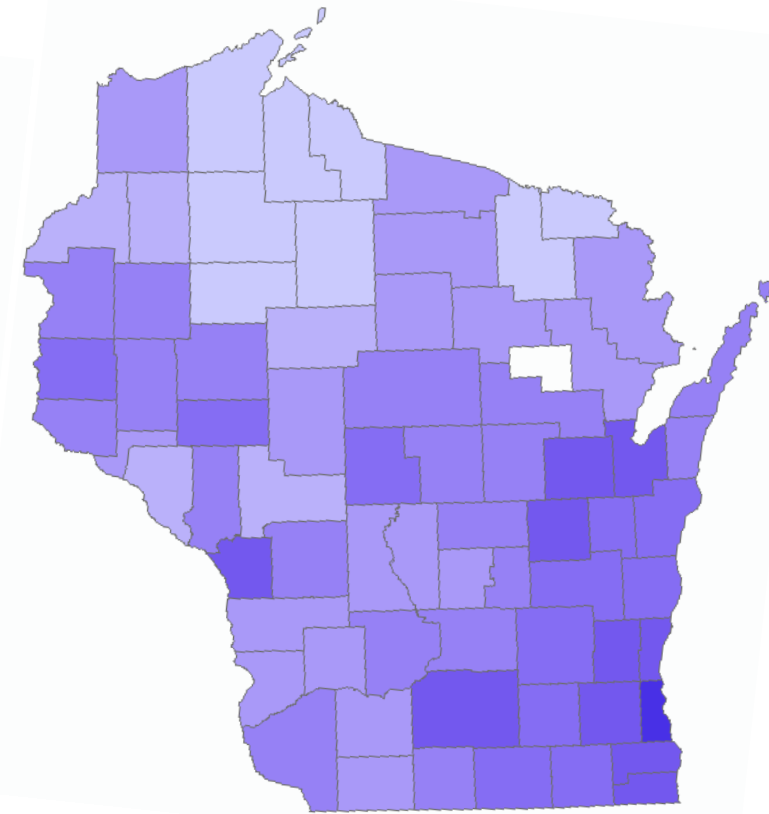




OMB: Nonmetropolitan



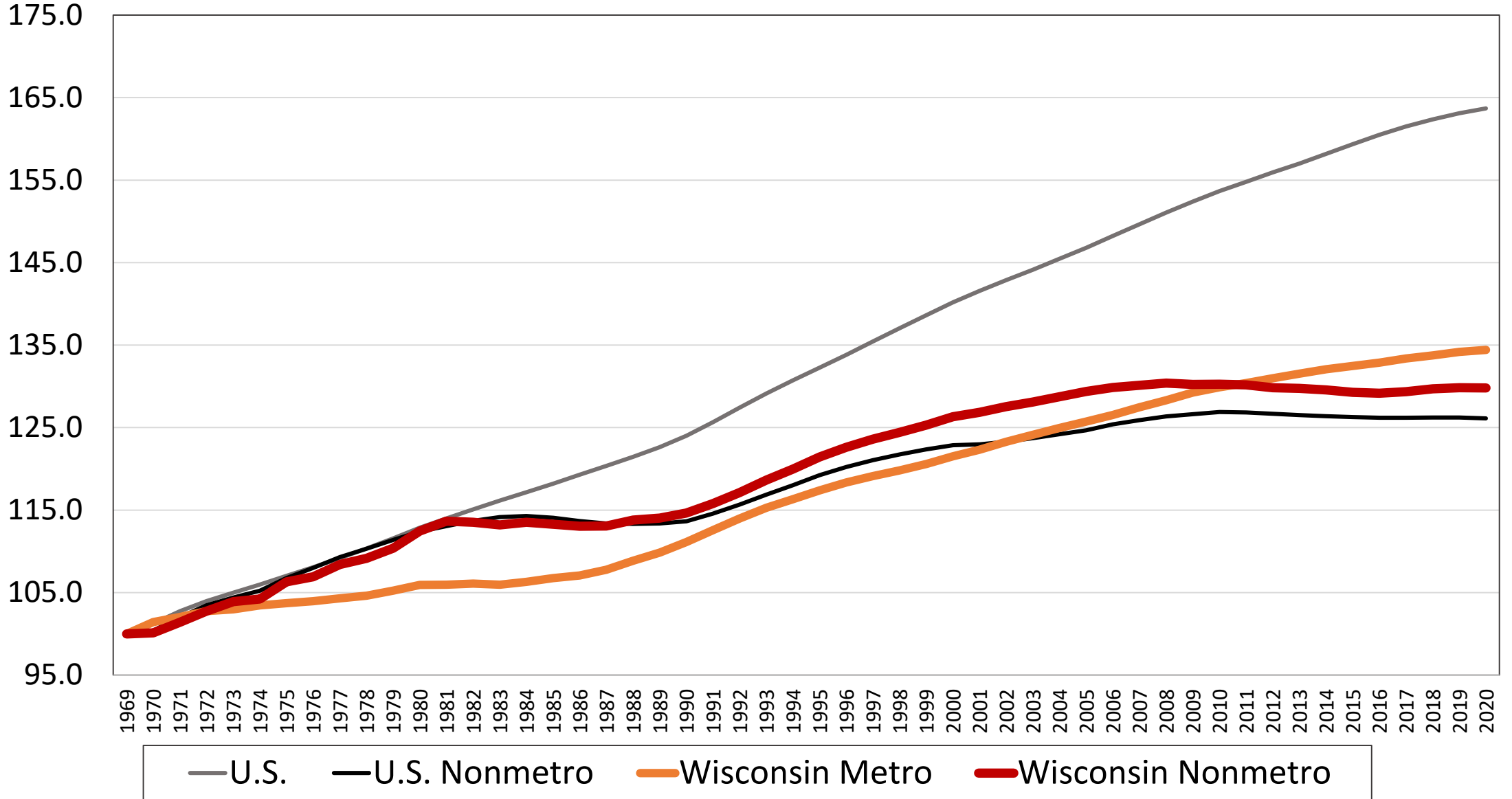
Census: Percent of the Population "Rural"



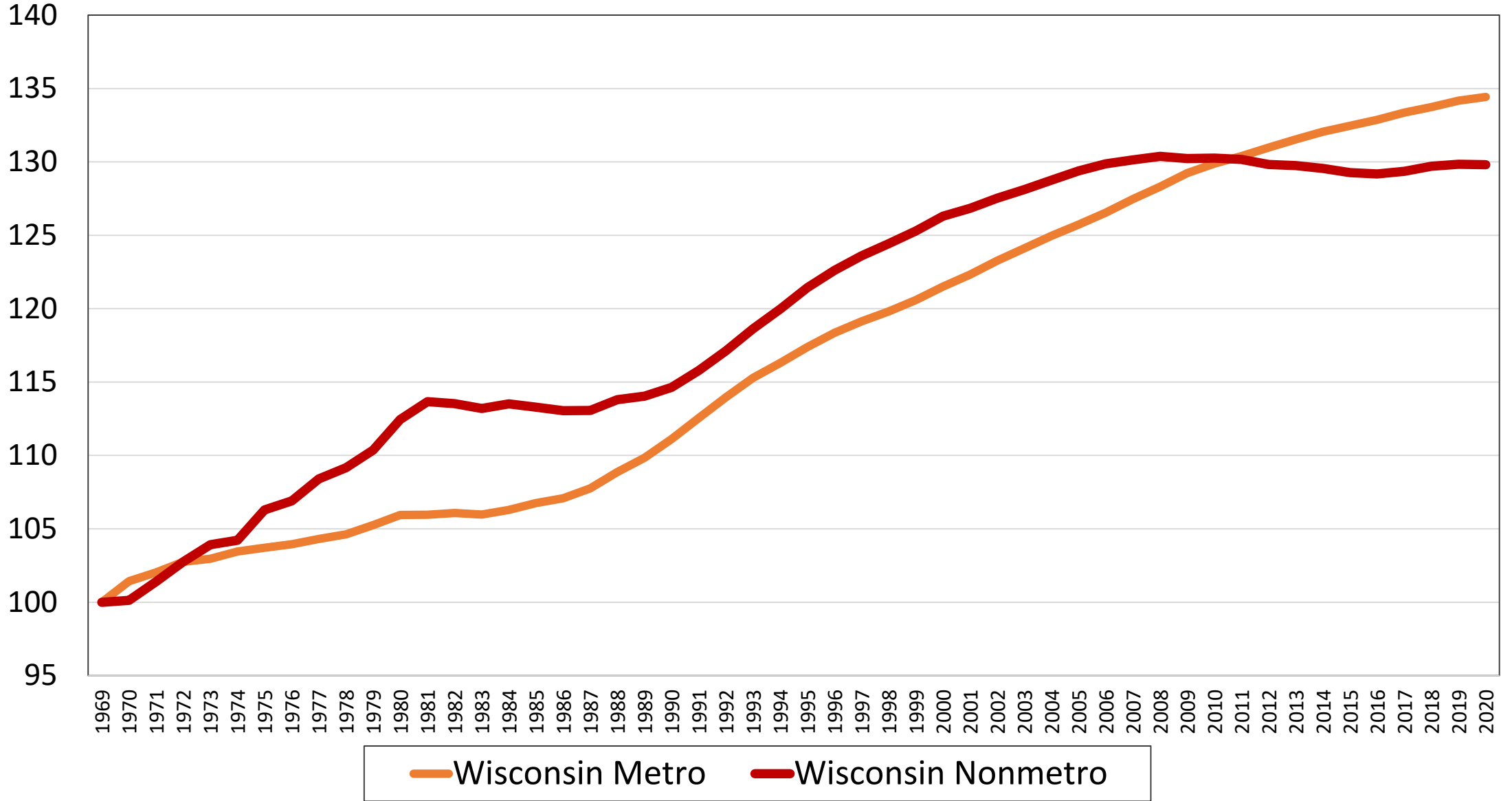
Population Density
(people per square mile)

What is "rural" Wisconsin?

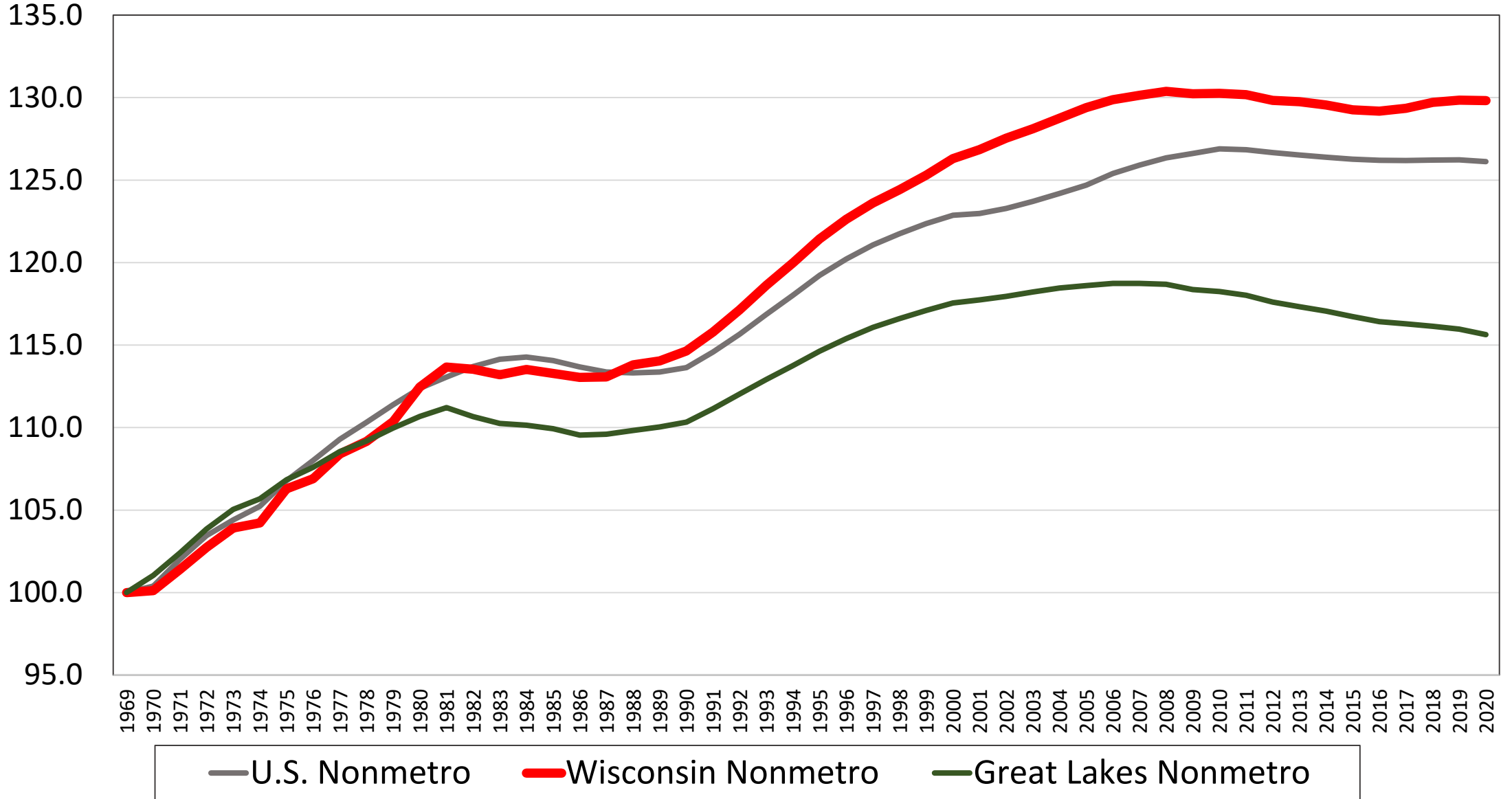
Population Growth (Index 1969 = 100.0)



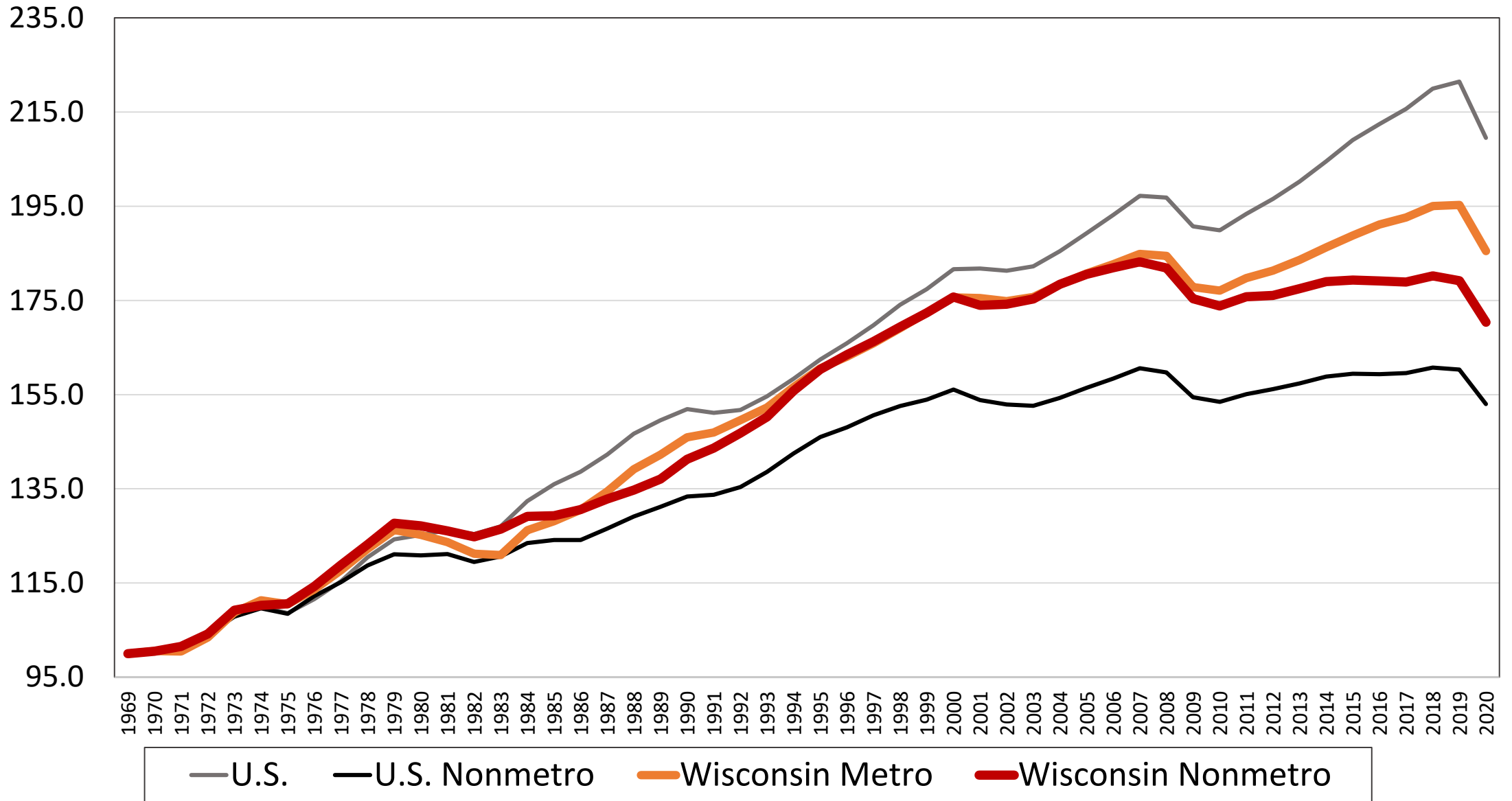
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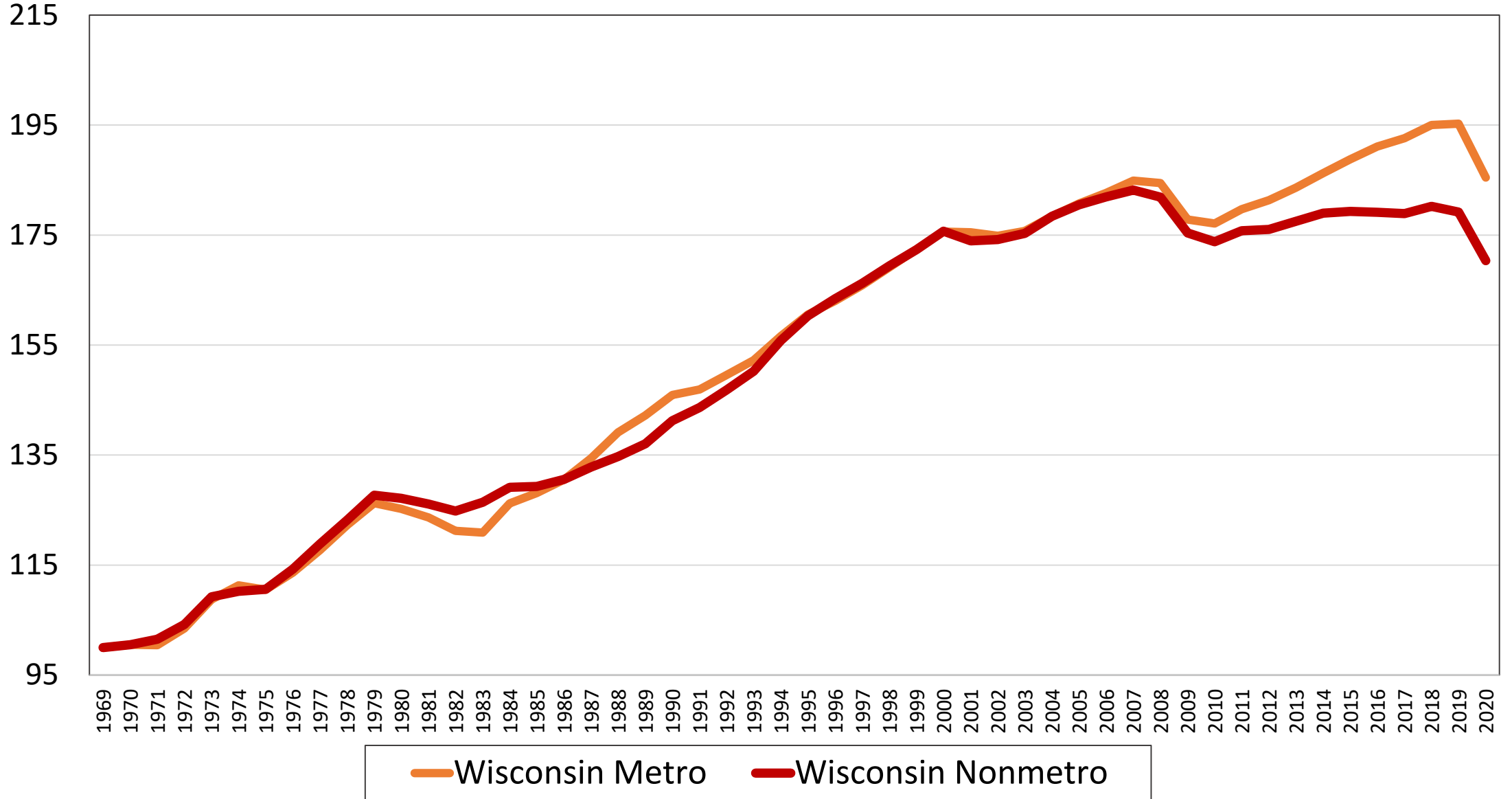
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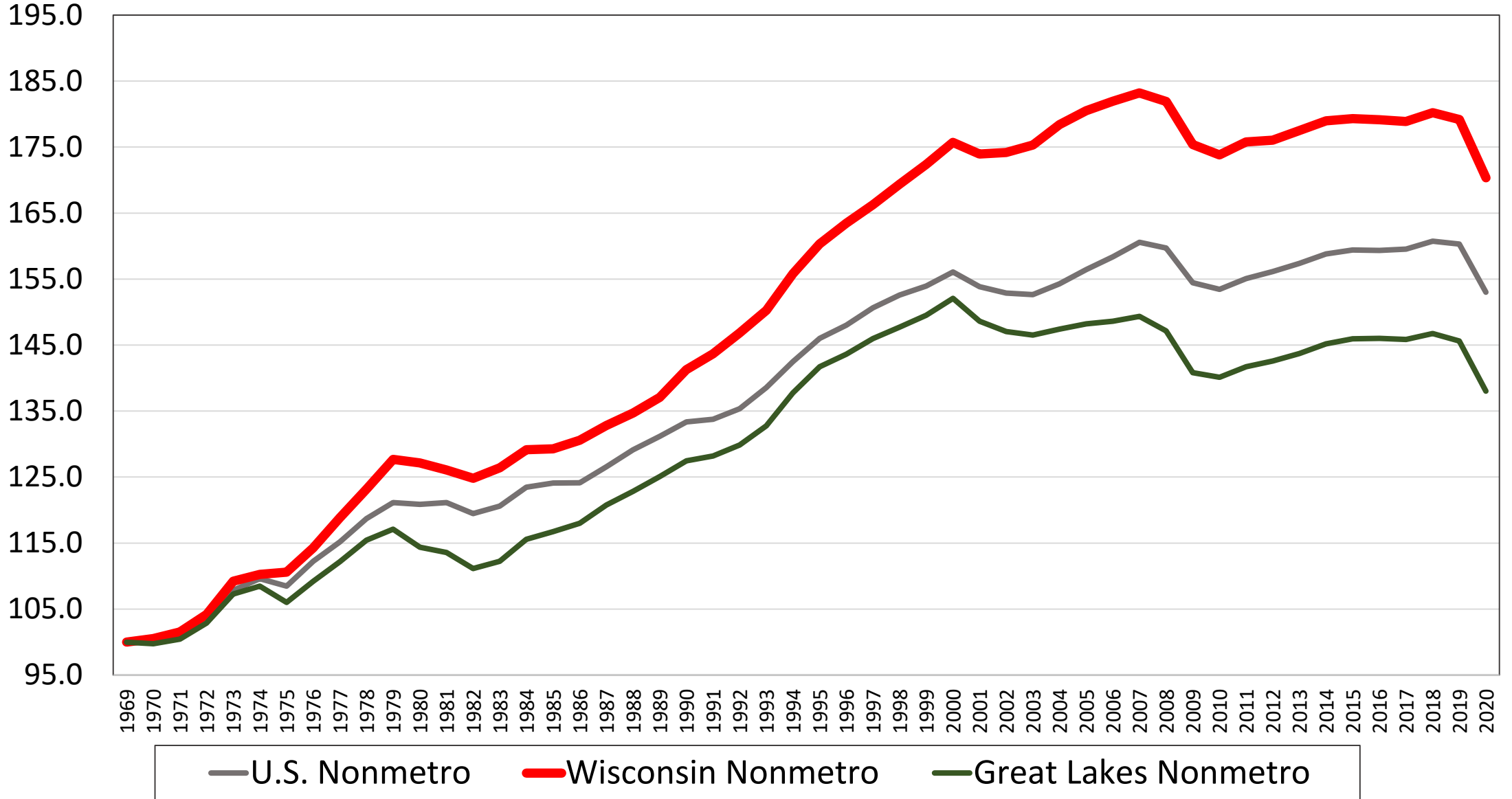
Employment Growth (Index 1969 = 100.0)



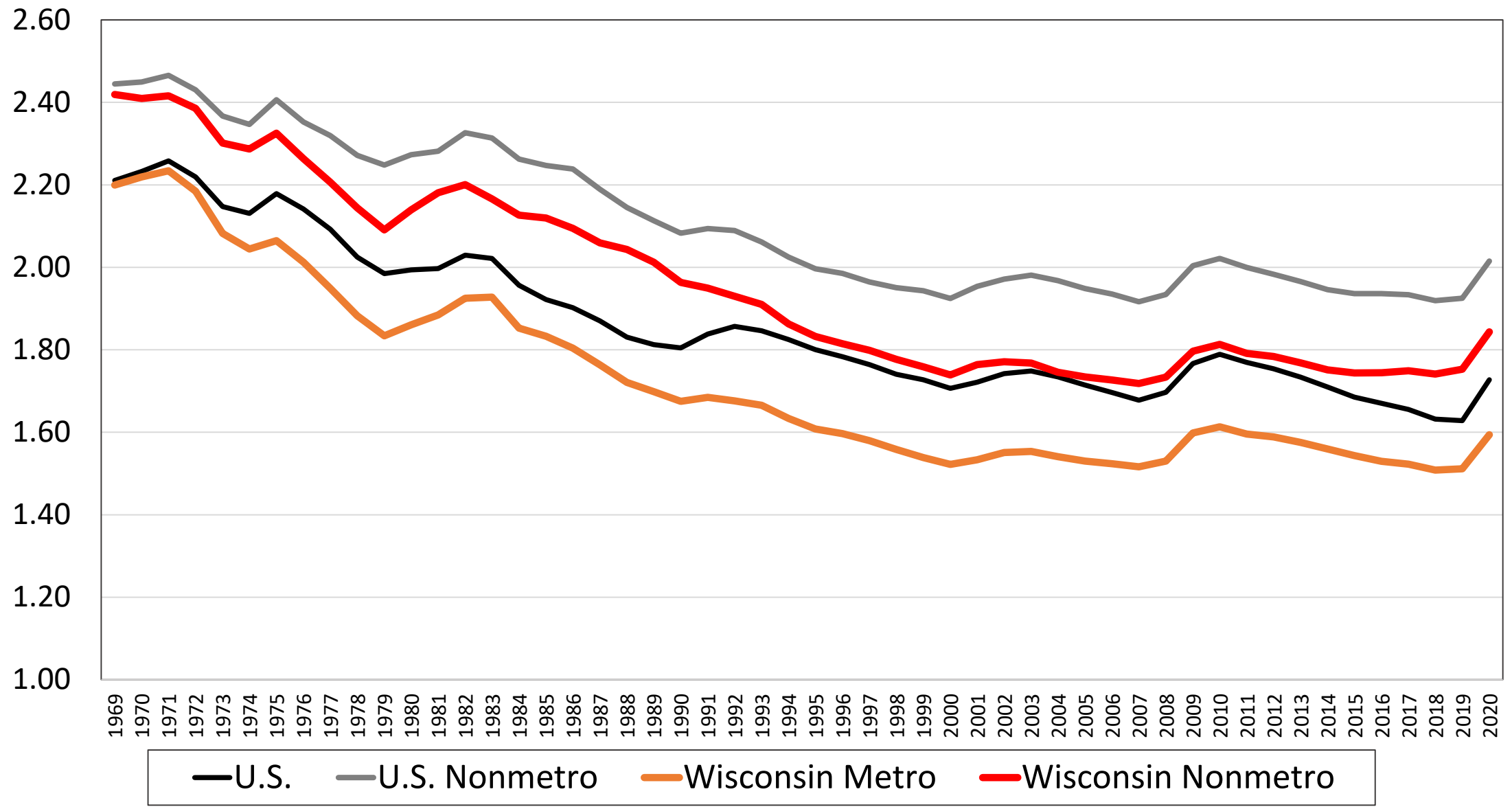
Employment Growth (Index 1969 = 100.0)



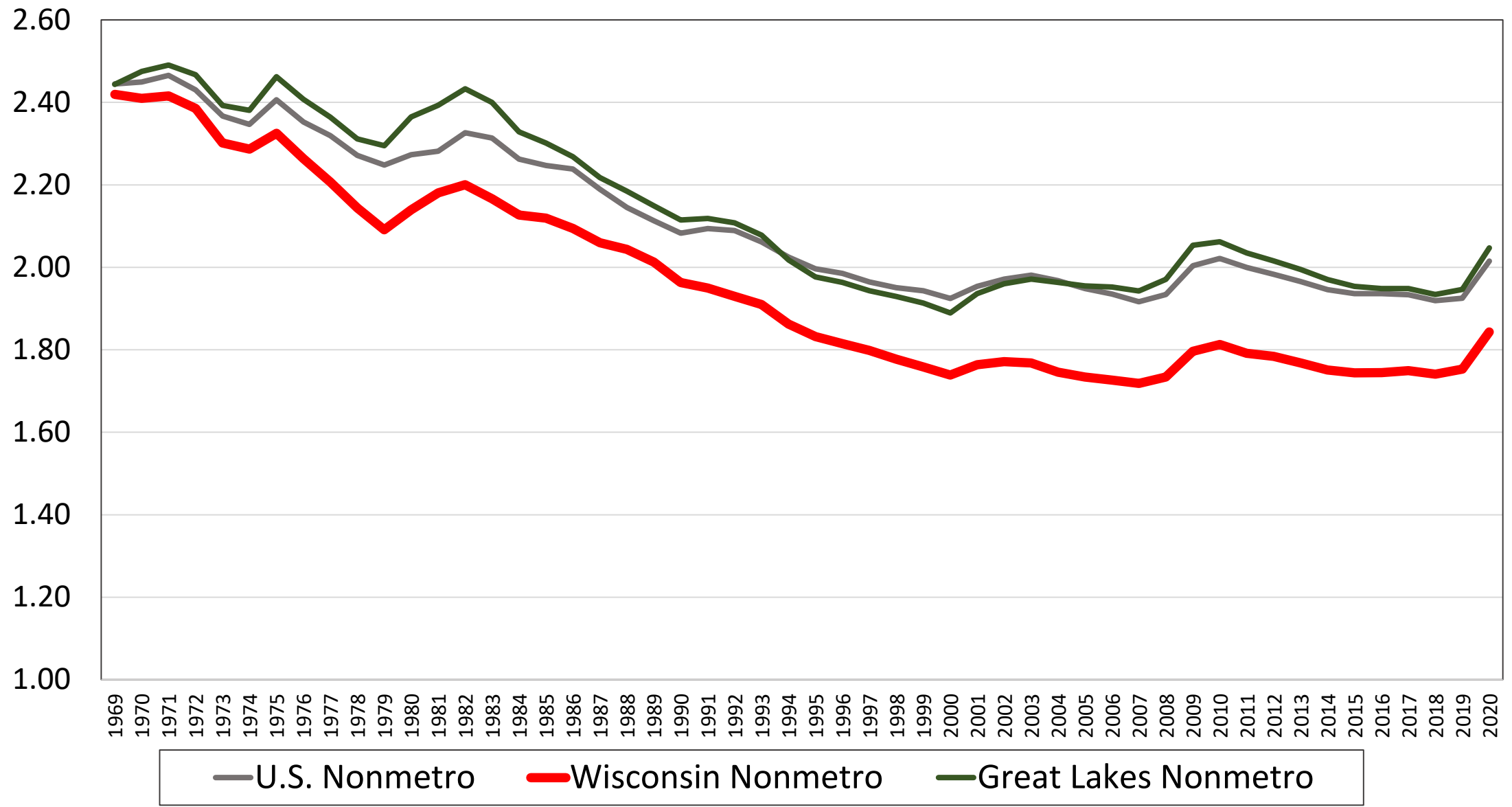
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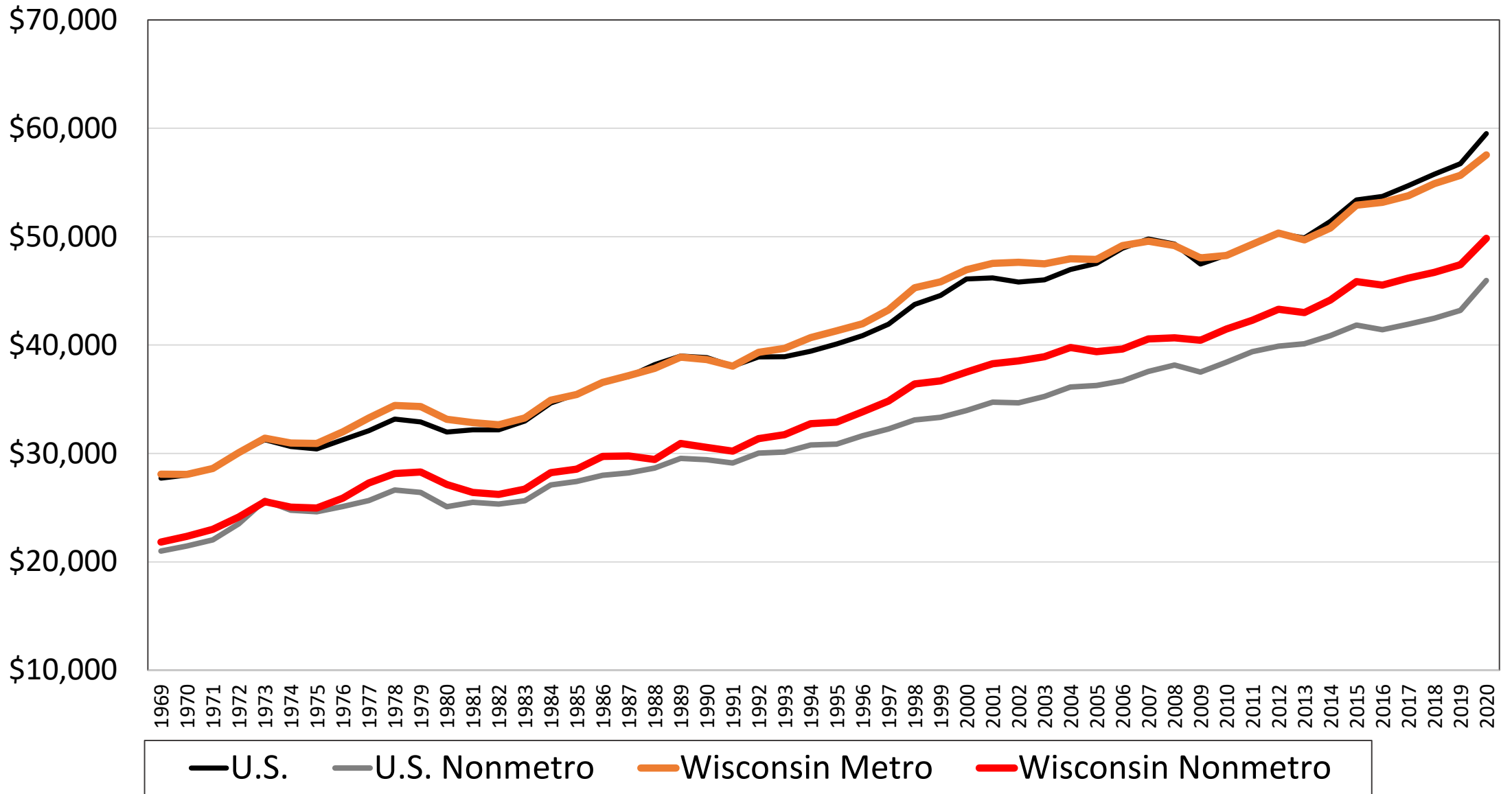
Population to Employment Ratio



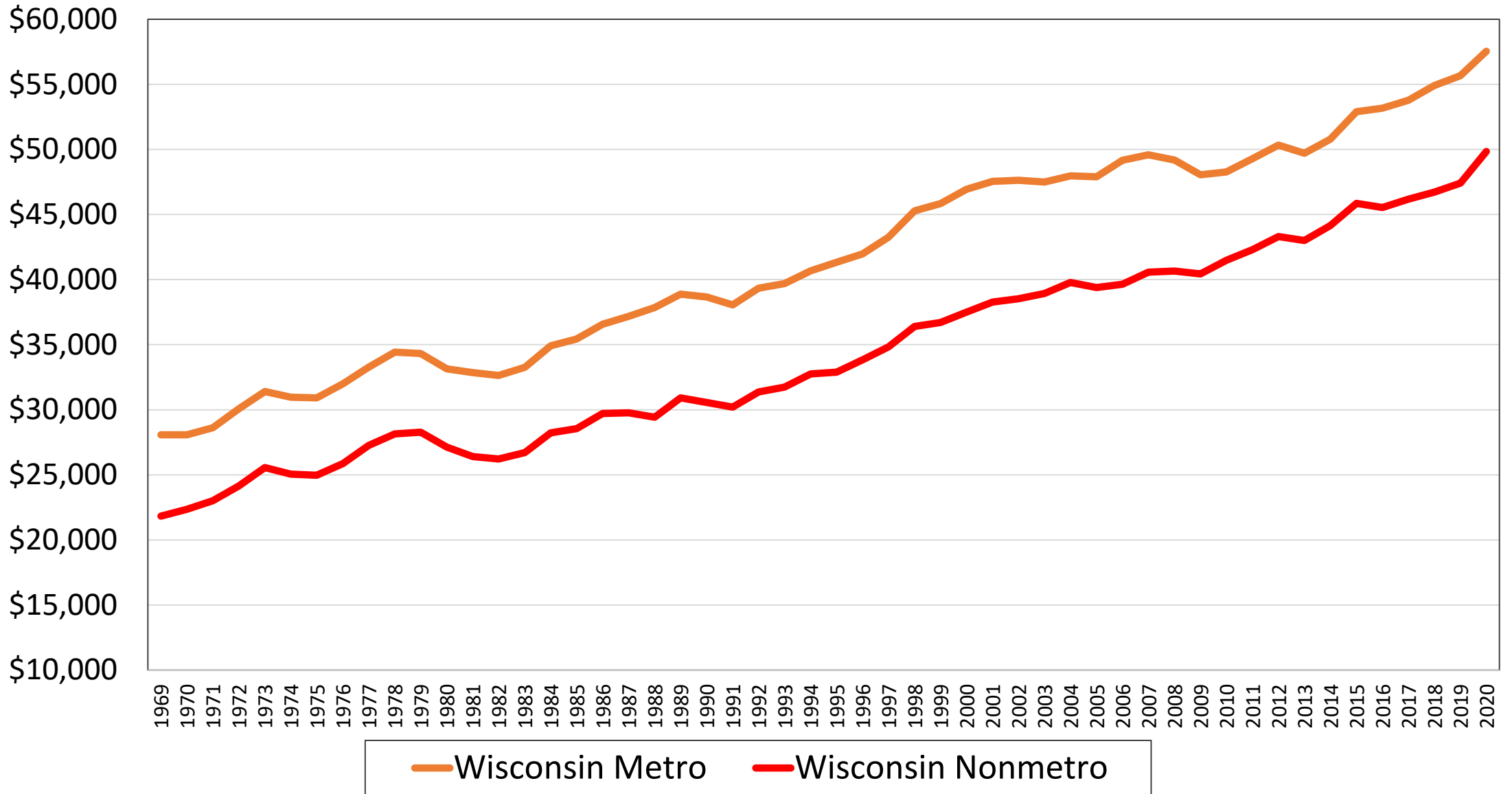
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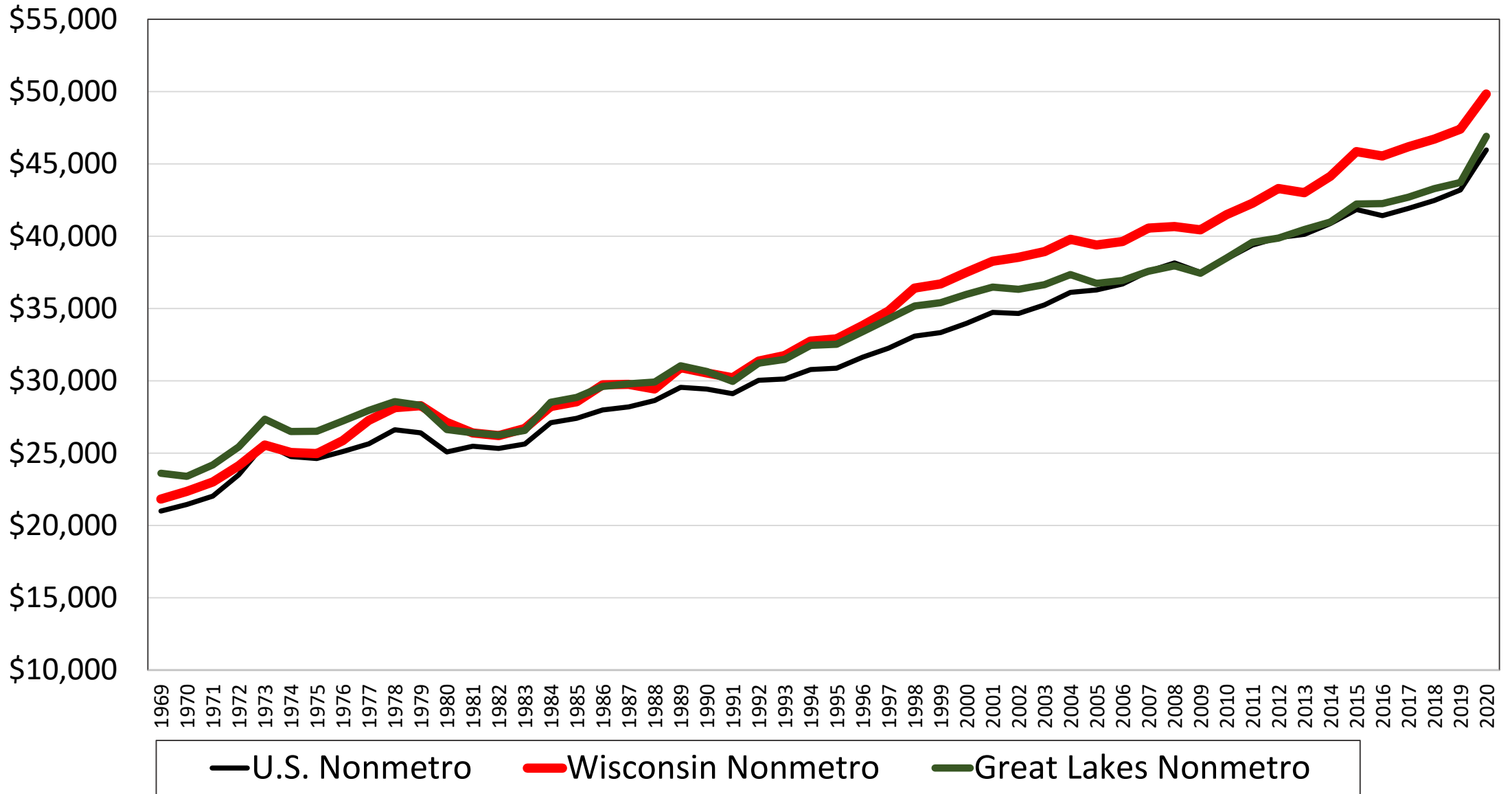
Per Capita Income (2020\$)



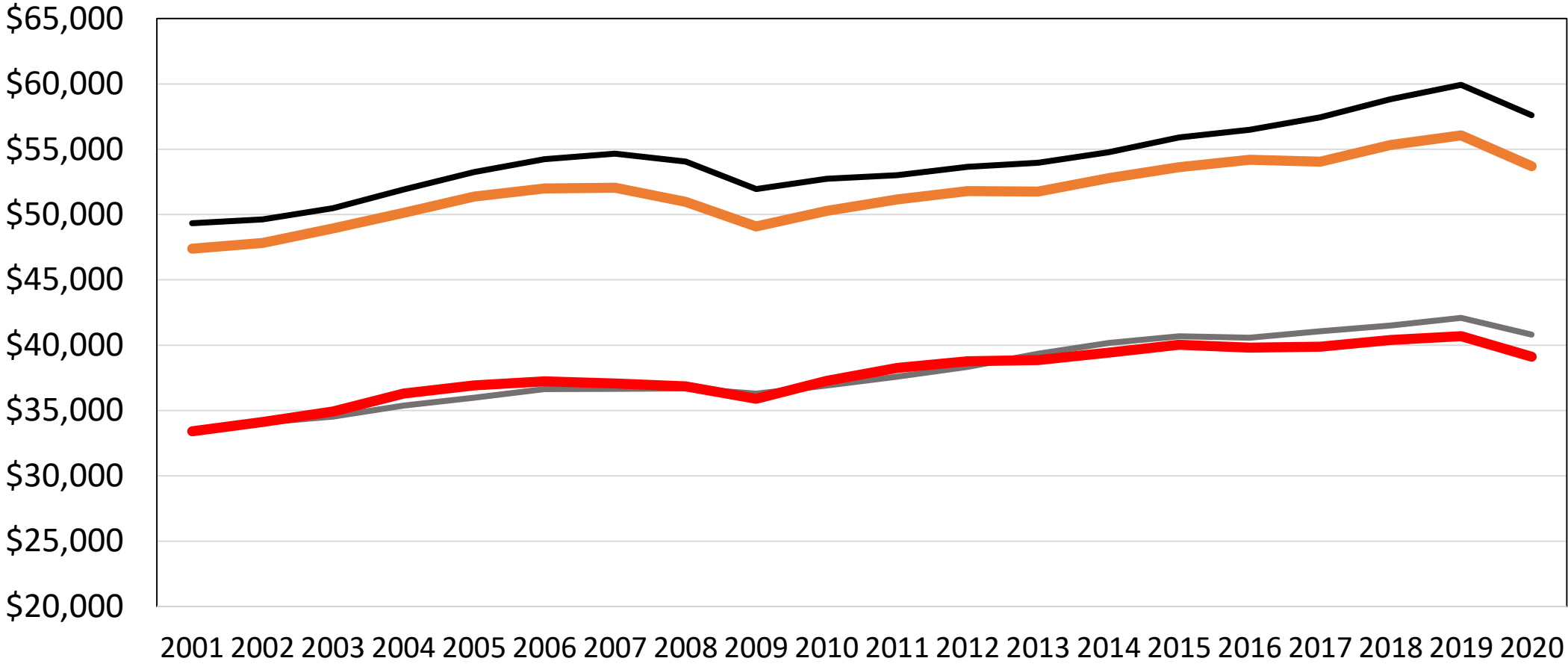
Per Capita Income (2020\$)



Per Capita Income (2020\$)



GDP Per Capita (2012\$)



— U.S. Metro — U.S. Nonmetro — Wisconsin Metro — Wisconsin Nonmetro



- How do we define “rural”?
- Population growth has stagnated.
- Historically employment growth tracks urban Wisconsin, except post the Great Recession.
- Rural Wisconsin has tended to “out-perform” rural areas of many parts of the U.S., particularly the Great Lakes region.
- We are generating more jobs than we have people to fill them.
- Evidence of COVID impacting the economy is clear, but the uptick in per capita income makes the “COVID Recession” different from all other recessions.



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