

Comparison of the Louisiana Economy to the Economies of the Rest of the Southeastern Conference and the United States

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For perspective about the Louisiana economy, it is instructive to compare employment, population, real GDP, real GDP per capita, and real GDP per worker in Louisiana to that in other states. Perhaps a natural comparison with a sports and outdoor activities-loving state like Louisiana are the states that are home to the schools in the Southeastern Conference (SEC).

The two tables immediately below summarize the performance of Louisiana relative to the rest of the SEC and the U.S. first from 2000-2025 and then from the pandemic bottom in 2020 to 2025. More detail is provided in subsequent tables and graphs.

2000-2025

Variable	Louisiana Rank within SEC 2000	Louisiana Rank within SEC 2025	%Change Louisiana	%Change Rest of SEC	%Change U.S.
Non-Farm Employment	7 th	9 th	3.8%	21.9%	20.0%
Resident Population	6 th	8 th	3.3%	25.8%	21.1%
Real GDP	6 th	8 th	25.8%	69.1%	69.2%
Per Capita Real GDP	4 th	6 th	21.9%	34.0%	39.7%
Per Worker Real GDP	1 st	5 th	21.2%	38.0%	41.0%

For every economic variable in the table, Louisiana's ranking within the SEC states slipped over the 2000-2025 period. For per capita and per worker real GDP, Louisiana remained in the top half of the SEC states. For per worker real GDP, Louisiana led the SEC in 2000 but fell to 5th in 2025. Population and real GDP fell from 6th in 2000 to 8th in 2025 and non-farm employment fell from 7th to 9th. The last three columns show why these rankings declined. For every variable, Louisiana's growth was substantially below the average growth in the rest of the SEC states (and the U.S. as well).

Recovery from the Pandemic and Afterwards: 2000 to 2025
2020-2025

Variable	%Change Louisiana	%Change Rest of SEC	%Change U.S.
Non-Farm Employment	8.1%	11.7%	11.4%
Resident Population	-0.7%	4.6%	3.0%
Real GDP	15.2%	18.6%	17.6%
Per Capita Real GDP	16.0%	13.3%	14.1%
Per Worker Real GDP	6.5%	6.2%	5.5%

In terms of growth rates from 2020-2025, the picture isn't as bleak for Louisiana except for resident population which fell over this period. The rates of change in non-farm employment and real GDP are much closer to the averages for the rest of the SEC states and the U.S. and are greater than the rest of the SEC states and the U.S. for per capita and per worker real GDP.

Non-Farm Employment, U.S. & States of the SEC

The table below shows annual total non-farm employment in the U.S. and the states of the SEC for 2000 and 2025 and the change in employment from 2000 to 2025.

In 2000, Louisiana had the 7th largest non-farm employment in the SEC but slipped to 9th in 2025. Louisiana employment rose only 73,500 over this period, a 3.83% increase. Only Mississippi had a smaller increase in employment and lower percentage change in employment. By a large margin, Texas, Florida, and Georgia are the states with the highest non-farm employment, and 5 states (Texas, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee) had a higher percentage increase in employment in from 2000-2025 than that of the U.S. economy.

Employment (thousands of workers), U.S. & States of the SEC

Location	2000	2025	Change	%Change
United States	132018.0	158439.0	26421.0	20.01
Alabama	1947.1(06)	2195.6(07)	248.5	12.76(08)
Arkansas	1149.7(12)	1338.7(11)	189.0	16.44(07)
Florida	7054.0(02)	9989.4(02)	2935.4	41.61(02)
Georgia	3978.5(03)	4983.6(03)	1005.1	25.26(04)
Kentucky	1816.6(09)	2033.1(08)	216.5	11.92(09)
Louisiana	1920.0(07)	1993.5(09)	73.5	3.83(11)
Missouri	2753.8(04)	2984.4(05)	230.6	8.37(10)
Mississippi	1155.1(11)	1191.1(12)	36.0	3.12(12)
Oklahoma	1502.3(10)	1790.0(10)	287.7	19.15(06)
South Carolina	1854.7(08)	2385.9(06)	531.2	28.64(03)
Tennessee	2738.8(05)	3367.0(04)	628.2	22.94(05)
Texas	9461.2(01)	14300.4(01)	4839.2	51.15(01)

Plots of total non-farm employment in Louisiana vs each state of SEC for 2000-2025 are found in Appendix A below.

Resident Population, U.S. & States of the SEC

Louisiana's resident population rose only 3.27% from 2000-2025, the smallest percentage increase in the SEC. Louisiana's population rose less than 150,000 in the 26 years covered in the table. All other SEC states, except Mississippi, had double-digit rates of population increase led by Texas' and Florida's 51% and 46%, respective, increases followed by 38% for Georgia and South Carolina. In 2000, Louisiana had the 6th largest population in the SEC but fell to 8th largest in 2025. Appendix B plots population for each year over 2000-2025 for each state in the SEC and reveals that, except for Louisiana and Mississippi, population in SEC states rose continually over this period. Louisiana's population increased from 2000 to 2005, then plunged after the Katrina-Rita double whammy and subsequently rose slowly to its peak in 2016. Louisiana population declined each year from 2015-2023 but rose slightly in both 2024 and 2025.

Resident Population (thousands), U.S. & States of the SEC

Location	2000	2025	Change	%Change
United States	282398.00	341945.00	59547.00	21.09
Alabama	4452.17(07)	5193.09(07)	740.91	16.64(07)
Arkansas	2678.59(12)	3114.79(11)	436.20	16.28(08)
Florida	16047.51(02)	23462.52(02)	7415.00	46.21(02)
Georgia	8227.30(03)	11302.75(03)	3075.44	37.38(04)
Kentucky	4049.02(08)	4606.86(09)	557.84	13.78(09)
Louisiana	4471.89(06)	4618.19(08)	146.30	3.27(12)
Missouri	5607.28(05)	6270.54(05)	663.26	11.83(10)
Mississippi	2848.35(11)	2954.16(12)	105.81	3.71(11)
Oklahoma	3454.36(10)	4123.29(10)	668.92	19.36(06)
South Carolina	4024.22(09)	5570.27(06)	1546.05	38.42(03)
Tennessee	5703.72(04)	7315.08(04)	1611.36	28.25(05)
Texas	20944.50(01)	31709.82(01)	10765.32	51.40(01)

Plots of resident population in Louisiana vs each state of SEC for 2000-2025 are found in Appendix B below.

Real GDP, U.S. & States of the SEC

How does Louisiana real GDP compare to that of the rest of the SEC? The first table below shows annual real GDP or GDP in the U.S. and the states of the SEC for 2000 and 2025 and the change in real GDP over this period.

As was the case for employment, real GDP in both Texas and Florida dwarfs that of the rest of the SEC, and these states had the largest percentage increases in real GDP in the SEC from 2000 to 2025. Georgia is third in the size of real GDP, and its real GDP is substantially larger than the states below it.

In 2000, Louisiana was 6th in size of real GDP but fell to 8th in 2025 and had the slowest growth in the SEC from 2000-2025. Louisiana's 25.84% increase over this period was only 38% of the average 69% growth in the rest of the SEC. As the plots in Appendix C show, Louisiana real GDP was much more volatile than for any of the other SEC states. Unlike Louisiana, whose output fluctuated around basically a stagnant level, fluctuations in real GDP in the other SEC states were around a rising level of real GDP.

Real GDP (\$millions), U.S. & States of the SEC

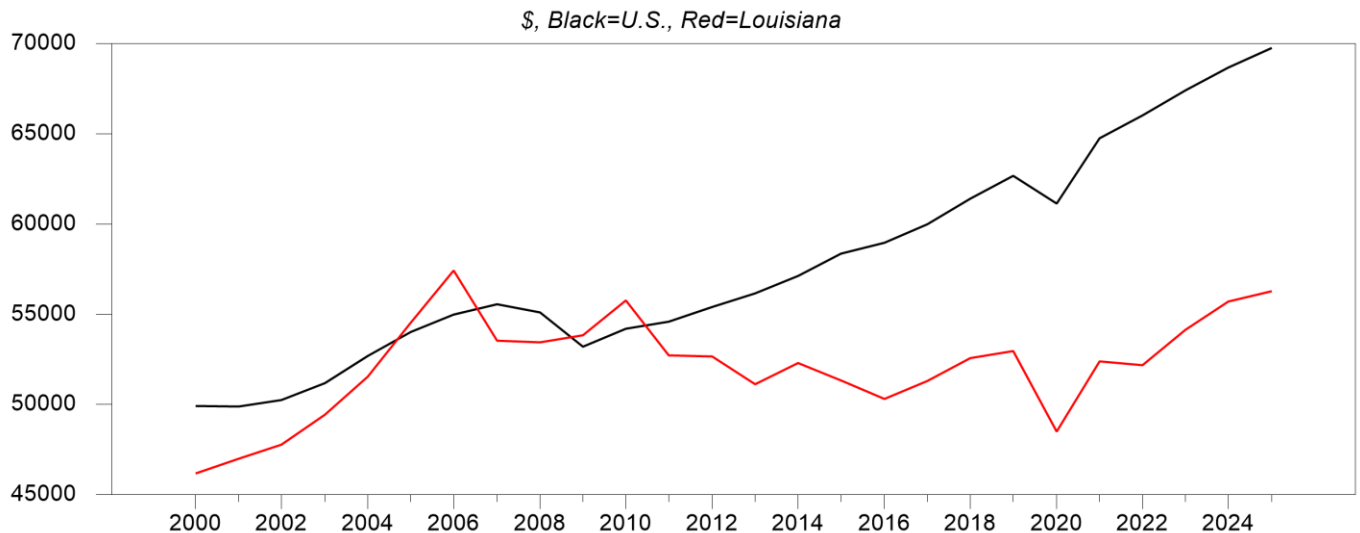
Location	2000	2025	Change	%Change
United States	14,096,033.0	23,850,442.0	9,754,409.0	69.20
Alabama	168,695.3(07)	260,648.0(07)	91,952.7	54.51(08)
Arkansas	95,509.8(11)	150,640.3(11)	55,130.5	57.72(07)
Florida	693,837.3(02)	1,393,837.0(02)	699,999.8	100.89(02)
Georgia	417,713.5(03)	710,412.3(03)	292,698.8	70.07(06)
Kentucky	161,101.0(09)	233,243.1(09)	72,142.1	44.78(09)
Louisiana	206,556.1(06)	259,927.1(08)	53,371.0	25.84(12)
Missouri	262,665.4(04)	357,965.8(05)	95,300.4	36.28(10)
Mississippi	93,957.0(12)	125,356.9(12)	31,399.9	33.42(11)
Oklahoma	121,170.2(10)	213,489.8(10)	92,319.6	76.19(05)
South Carolina	161,880.2(08)	286,774.3(06)	124,894.1	77.15(04)
Tennessee	251,030.2(05)	449,356.6(04)	198,326.4	79.00(03)
Texas	989,904.9(01)	2,277,203.0(01)	1,287,298.0	130.04(01)

Plots of real GDP in Louisiana vs each state of SEC for 2000-2025 are found in Appendix C below.

Real Per Capita GDP (\$), U.S. & States of the SEC*

*real GDP divided by resident population

Louisiana vs U.S. Real GSP/GDP Per Capita



We see strong real per capita GDP growth in Louisiana in the early 2000s, reaching a peak in 2006 and exceeding U.S. real per capital GDP in that year. Unfortunately, since then Louisiana real GDP per capita drifted down and fell to levels persistently below U.S. real per capita GDP after 2010, reaching its post-peak minimum in the pandemic. Louisiana real GDP per capita has rebounded from its pandemic low but is still below its peak reached almost 20 years earlier and remains well

below U.S. real GDP per capita. In contrast, real GDP per capita for the U.S. is 40% higher in 2025 than in 2000 and declines were only transitory. Although Louisiana's real GDP per capita is 22% higher in 2025 than in 2000, it is instructive to look separately at the 2000-2006 period and the 2006-2025 period. From 2000-2006, Louisiana's real GDP rose 25%, but declined 2% from 2006-2025. However, Louisiana real GDP per capita has increased each year from 2022-2025.

How does Louisiana compare to the rest of the SEC? Louisiana was 4th in the SEC in 2000 but slipped to 6th in 2025. In 2000, Louisiana's real per capita GDP was 93% of U.S. real per capita GDP, but this fell to 81% in 2025. Among SEC states, Louisiana's increase of \$10,093 in real per capita GDP exceeded only Mississippi's increase. Louisiana and Missouri essentially tied for last for in the rate of growth in real GDP per capita of the SEC states over this period.

State	2000	2025	Change	% Change
United States	49,915.48	69,749.35	19,833.87	39.73
Alabama	37,890.55(09)	50,191.33(10)	12,300.78	32.46(06)
Arkansas	35,656.77(10)	48,362.89(11)	12,706.12	35.63(05)
Florida	43,236.43(06)	59,406.97(04)	16,170.54	37.40(04)
Georgia	50,771.62(01)	62,853.06(02)	12,081.44	23.80(10)
Kentucky	39,787.64(08)	50,629.47(09)	10,841.83	27.25(09)
Louisiana	46,189.94(04)	56,283.34(06)	10,093.40	21.85(12)
Missouri	46,843.60(03)	57,086.91(05)	10,243.31	21.87(11)
Mississippi	32,986.43(12)	42,434.03(12)	9,447.59	28.64(07)
Oklahoma	35,077.42(11)	51,776.59(07)	16,699.18	47.61(02)
South Carolina	40,226.45(07)	51,482.98(08)	11,256.53	27.98(08)
Tennessee	44,011.67(05)	61,428.84(03)	17,417.17	39.57(03)
Texas	47,263.24(02)	71,813.82(01)	24,550.58	51.94(01)

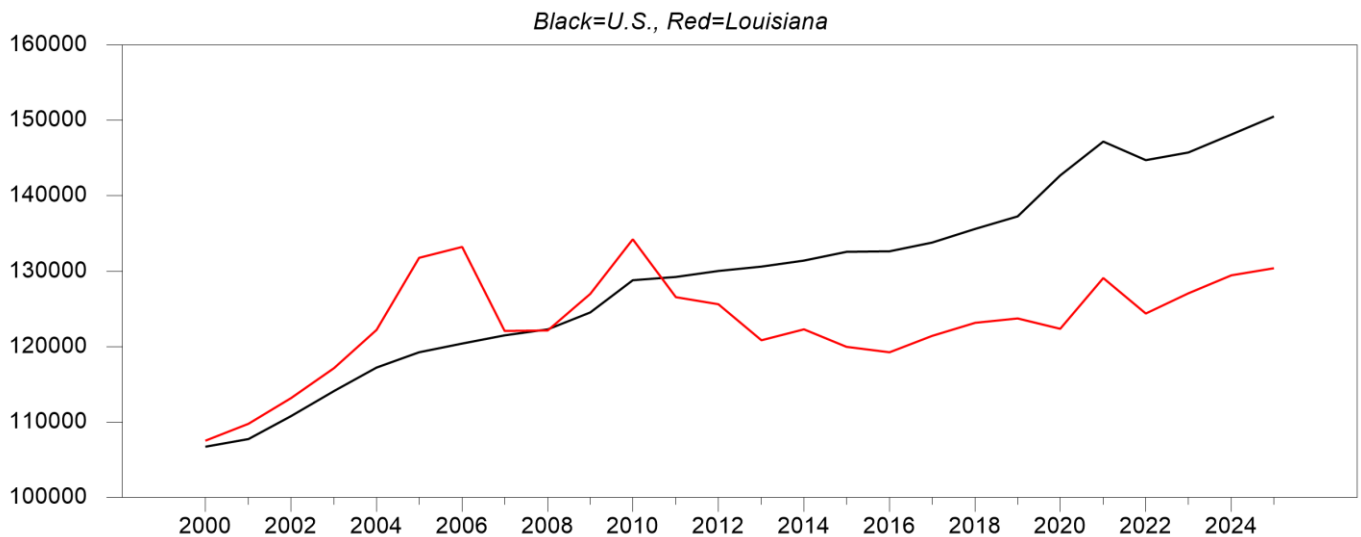
Plots of real GDP per capita in Louisiana vs each state of SEC for 2000-2024 are found in Appendix D below.

Real Per Worker GDP (\$), U.S. & States of the SEC*

*real GDP divided by employed workers

What about real GDP per worker, a measure of the average productivity of a non-farm worker?

Louisiana vs U.S. Real GSP/GDP Per Worker



Unlike real per capita GDP, real GDP per worker, except for 2008, is persistently above U.S. real GDP per worker through 2010. After this, like real per capita GDP, Louisiana real GDP per worker is consistently below the comparable U.S. measure. Thus, 2010 is a watershed year for both per capita and per worker Louisiana real GDP. The reason(s) for this will be explored in future updates. Within the SEC, Louisiana was 1st in 2000 but fell to 5th in 2025. Louisiana's growth in real per worker GDP of 21.2% from 2000 to 2025 was the slowest in the SEC.

Location	2000	2025	Change	%Change
United States	106,773.57	150,533.91	43,760.34	40.98
Alabama	86,639.26(09)	118,713.79(09)	32,074.53	37.02(06)
Arkansas	83,073.67(10)	112,527.30(11)	29,453.63	35.45(08)
Florida	98,360.83(04)	139,531.61(03)	41,170.78	41.86(04)
Georgia	104,992.71(02)	142,550.02(02)	37,557.31	35.77(07)
Kentucky	88,682.7(07)	114,722.89(10)	26,040.18	29.36(10)
Louisiana	107,581.30(01)	130,387.31(05)	22,806.01	21.20(12)
Missouri	95,382.89(05)	119,945.65(07)	24,562.76	25.75(11)
Mississippi	81,341.01(11)	105,244.65(12)	23,903.64	29.39(09)
Oklahoma	80,656.46(12)	119,268.04(08)	38,611.58	47.87(02)
South Carolina	87,281.07(08)	120,195.44(06)	32,914.37	37.71(05)
Tennessee	91,657.00(06)	133,459.04(04)	41,802.04	45.61(03)
Texas	104,627.84(03)	159,240.53(01)	54,612.69	52.20(01)

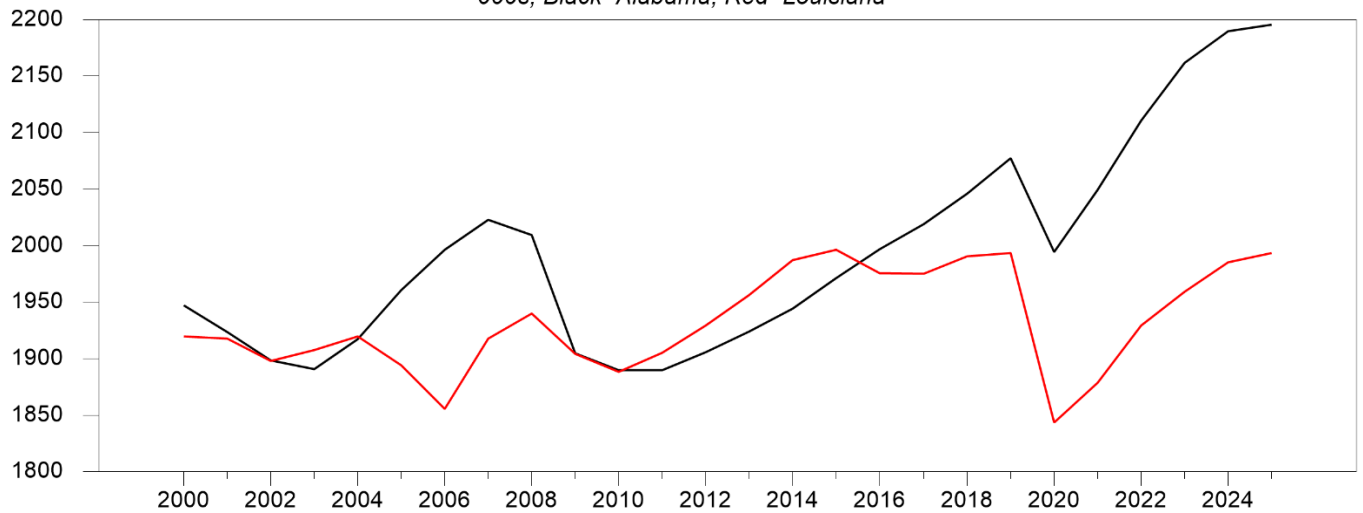
Plots of real GDP per worker in Louisiana vs each state of SEC for 2000-2025 are found in Appendix E below.

In terms of the size of the economy (total real GDP), over the 2000-2025 period Louisiana slipped from the last position in the top half of the SEC (6th) to 8th. Louisiana's relative standing in terms of real GDP per capita or real GDP per worker was and is higher than for real GDP, but, unfortunately, Louisiana slipped in its position for both per capita and per worker real GDP from 2000 to 2025.

Appendix A: Plots of Louisiana Employment vs Each State of the SEC 2000-2025

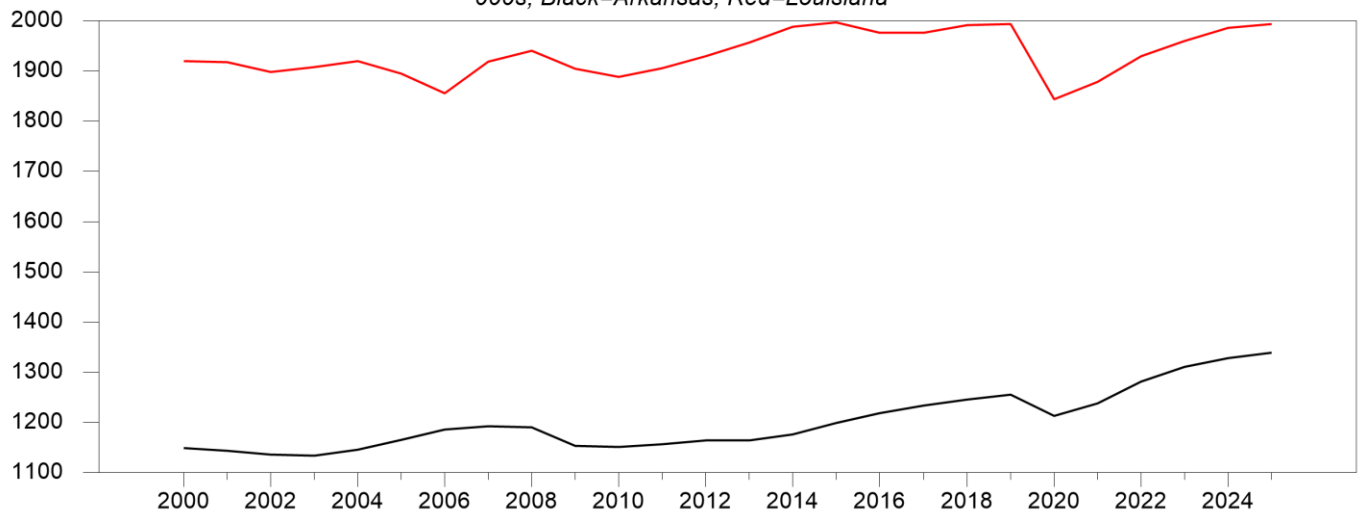
Louisiana vs Alabama Non-Farm Employment

000s, Black=Alabama, Red=Louisiana



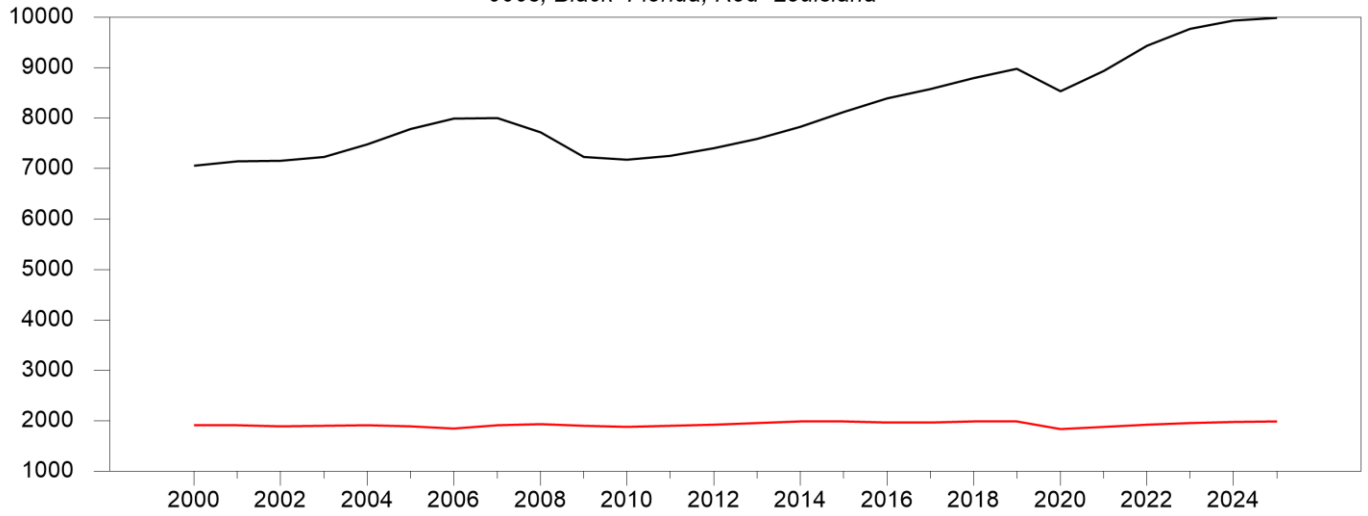
Louisiana vs Arkansas Non-Farm Employment

000s, Black=Arkansas, Red=Louisiana



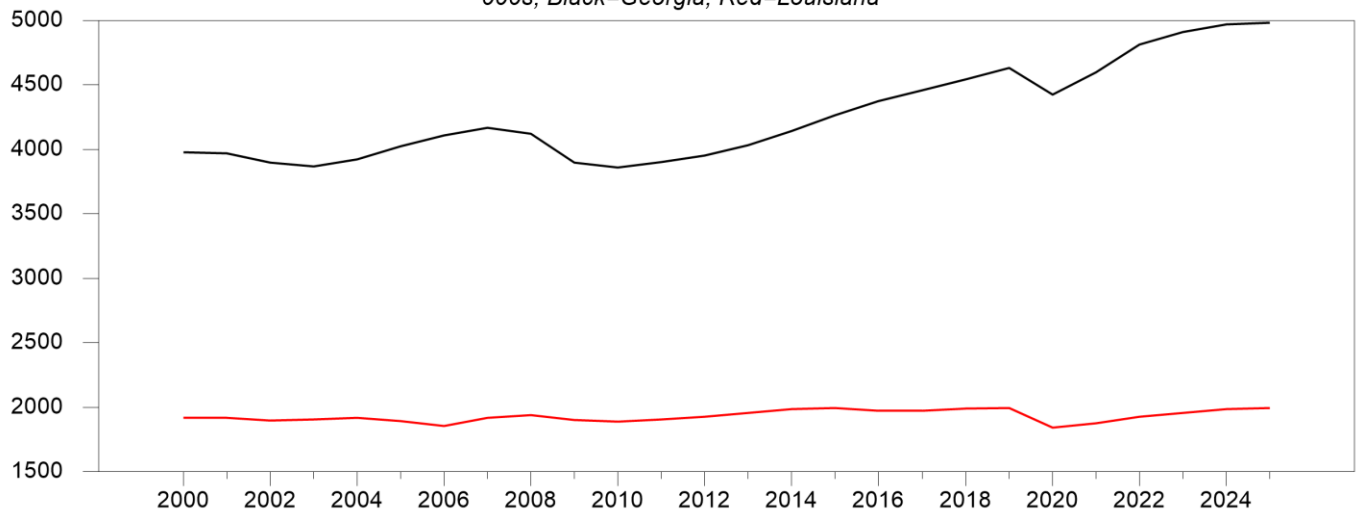
Louisiana vs Florida Non-Farm Employment

000s, Black=Florida, Red=Louisiana



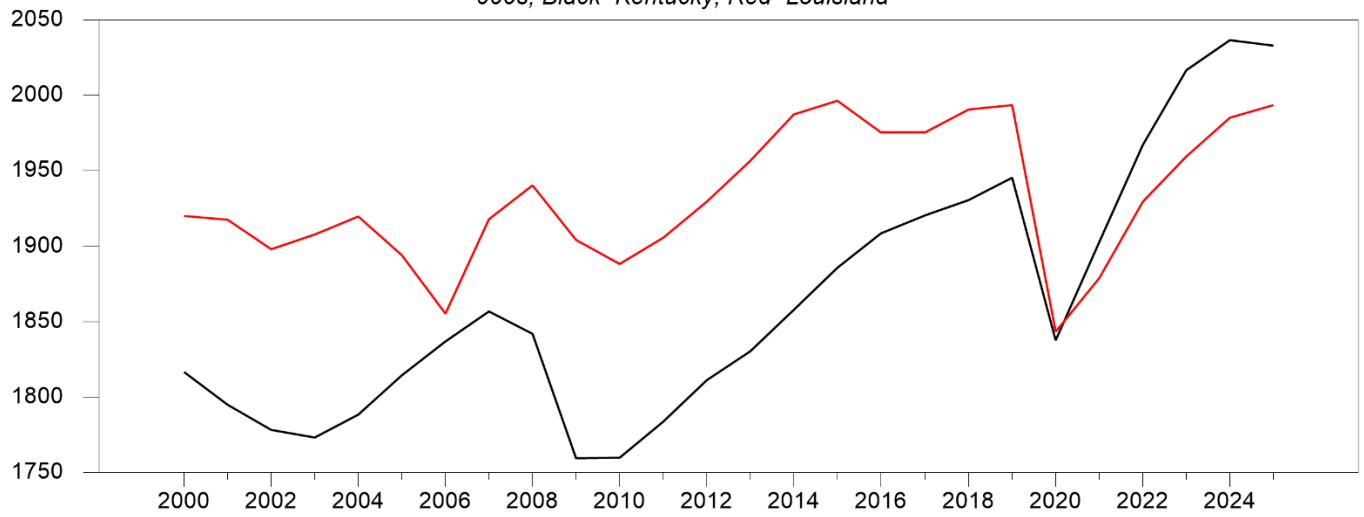
Louisiana vs Georgia Non-Farm Employment

000s, Black=Georgia, Red=Louisiana



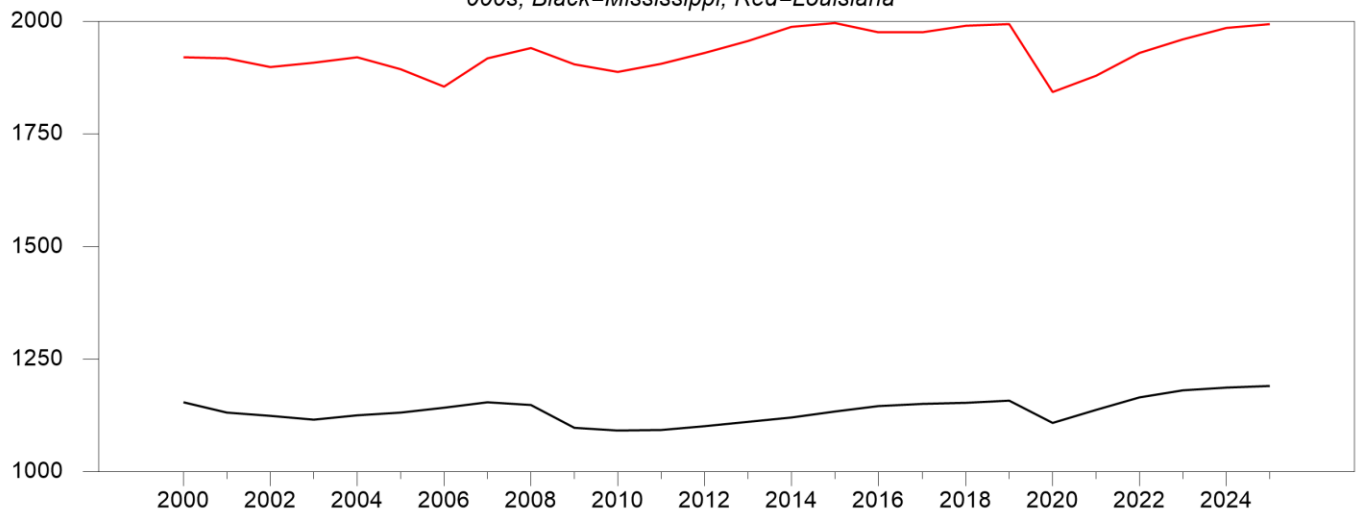
Louisiana vs Kentucky Non-Farm Employment

000s, Black=Kentucky, Red=Louisiana



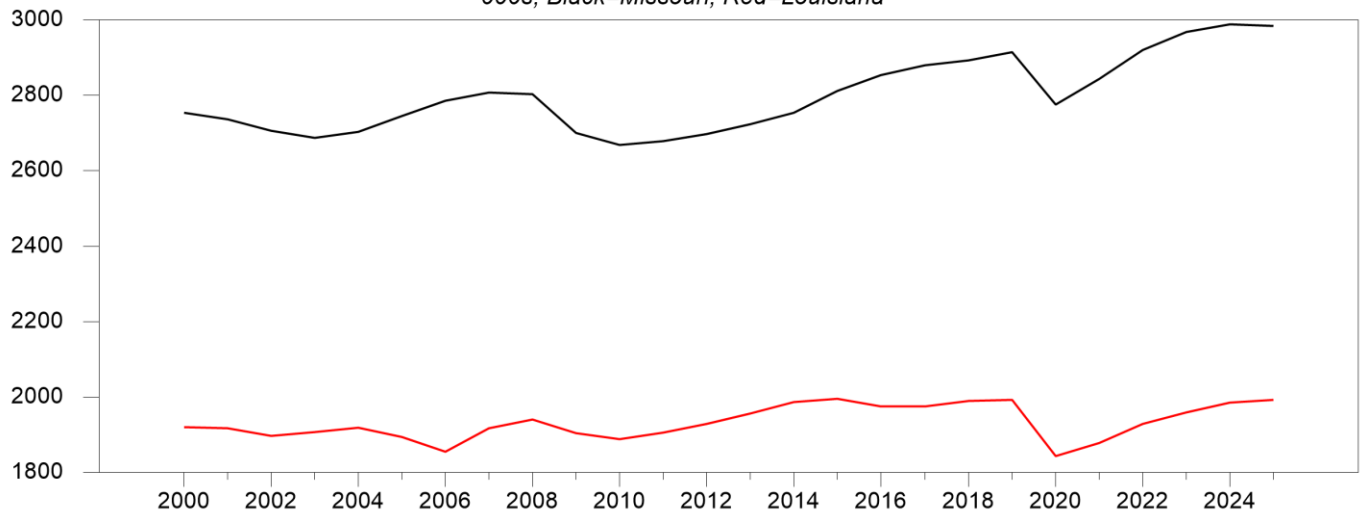
Louisiana vs Mississippi Non-Farm Employment

000s, Black=Mississippi, Red=Louisiana



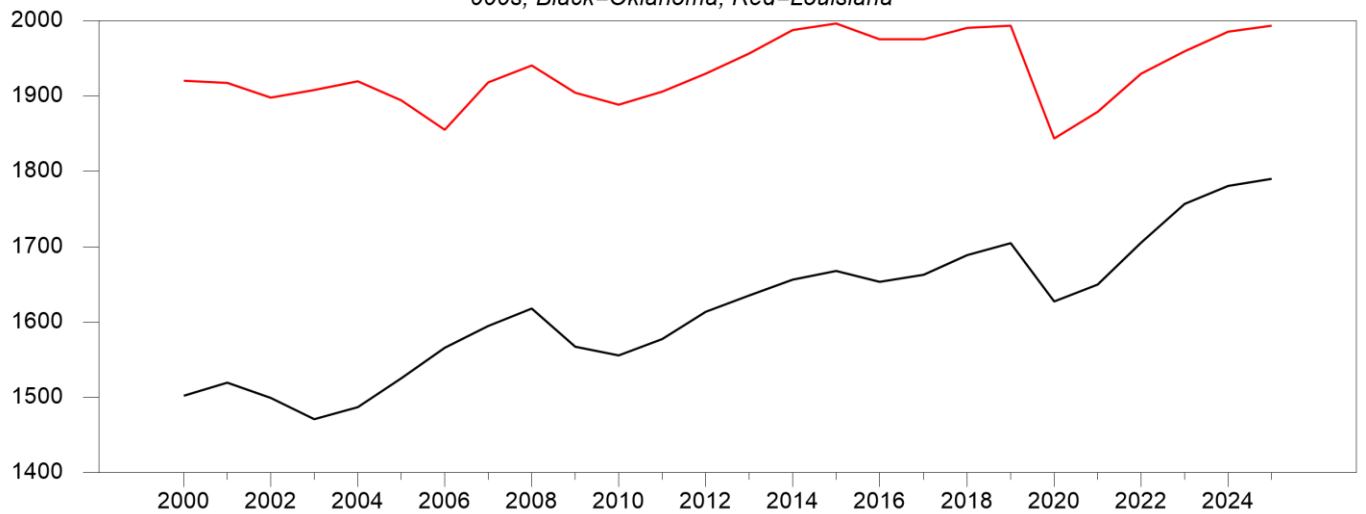
Louisiana vs Missouri Non-Farm Employment

000s, Black=Missouri, Red=Louisiana



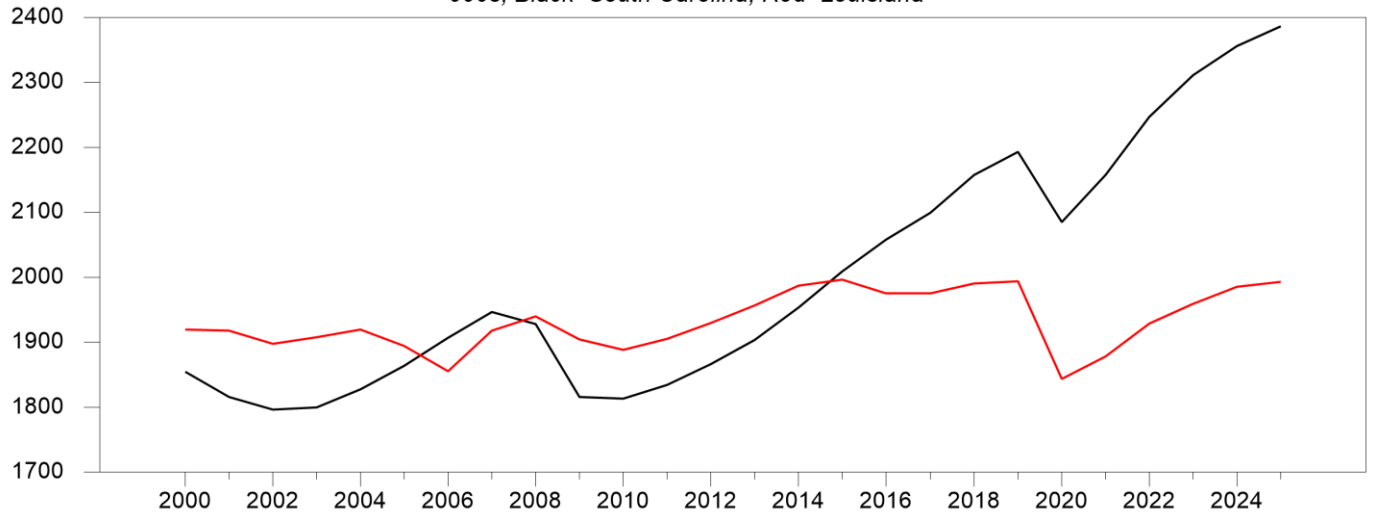
Louisiana vs Oklahoma Non-Farm Employment

000s, Black=Oklahoma, Red=Louisiana



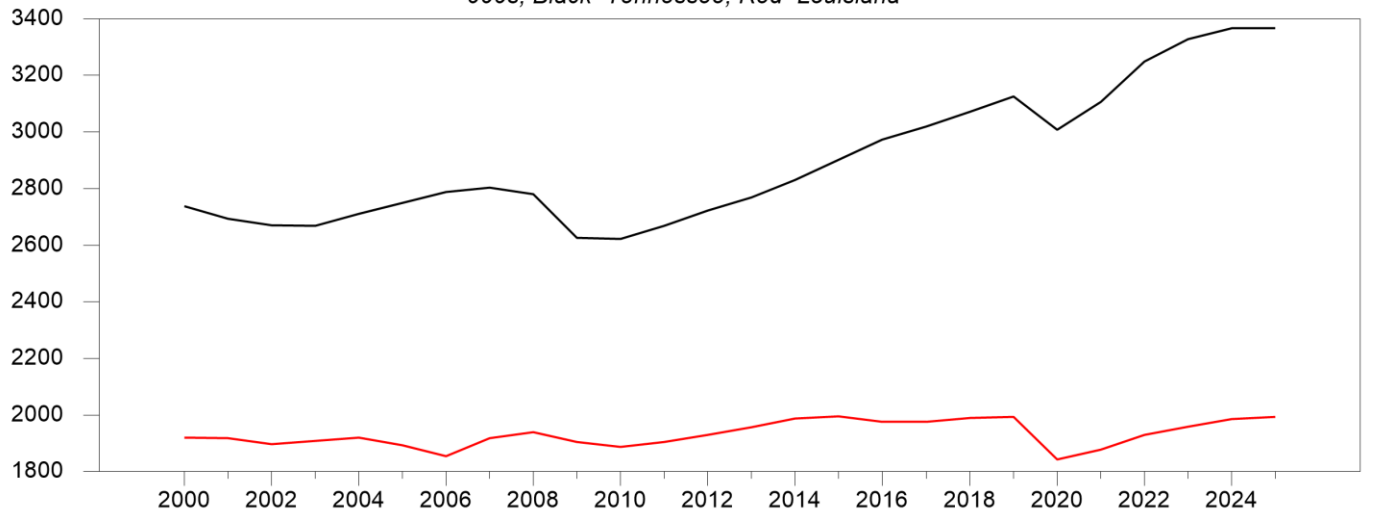
Louisiana vs South Carolina Non-Farm Employment

000s, Black=South Carolina, Red=Louisiana



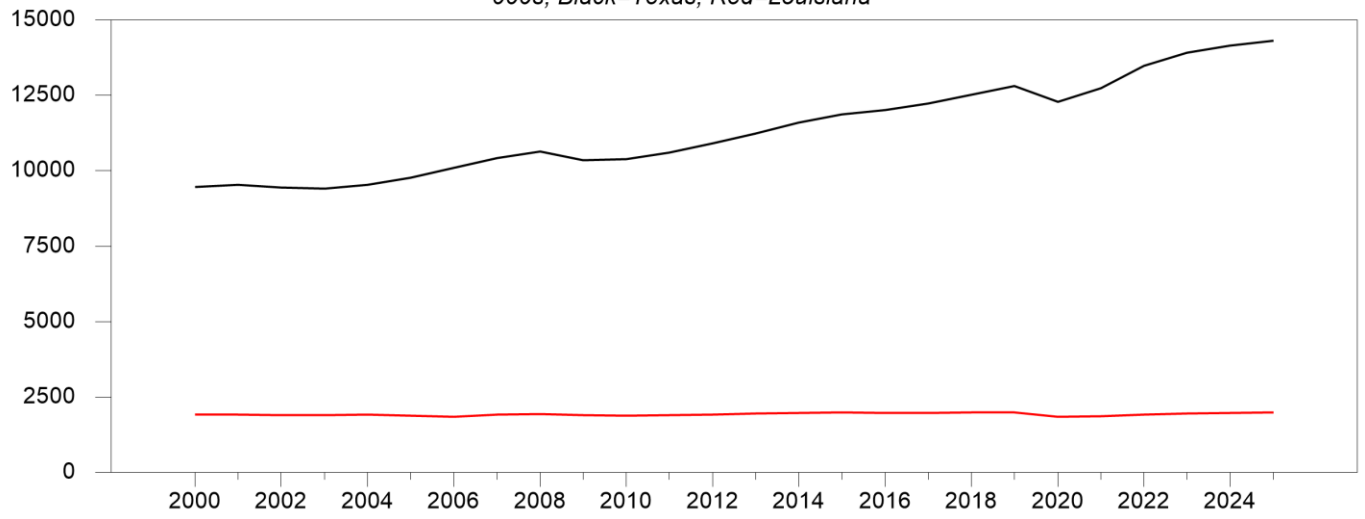
Louisiana vs Tennessee Non-Farm Employment

000s, Black=Tennessee, Red=Louisiana



Louisiana vs Texas Non-Farm Employment

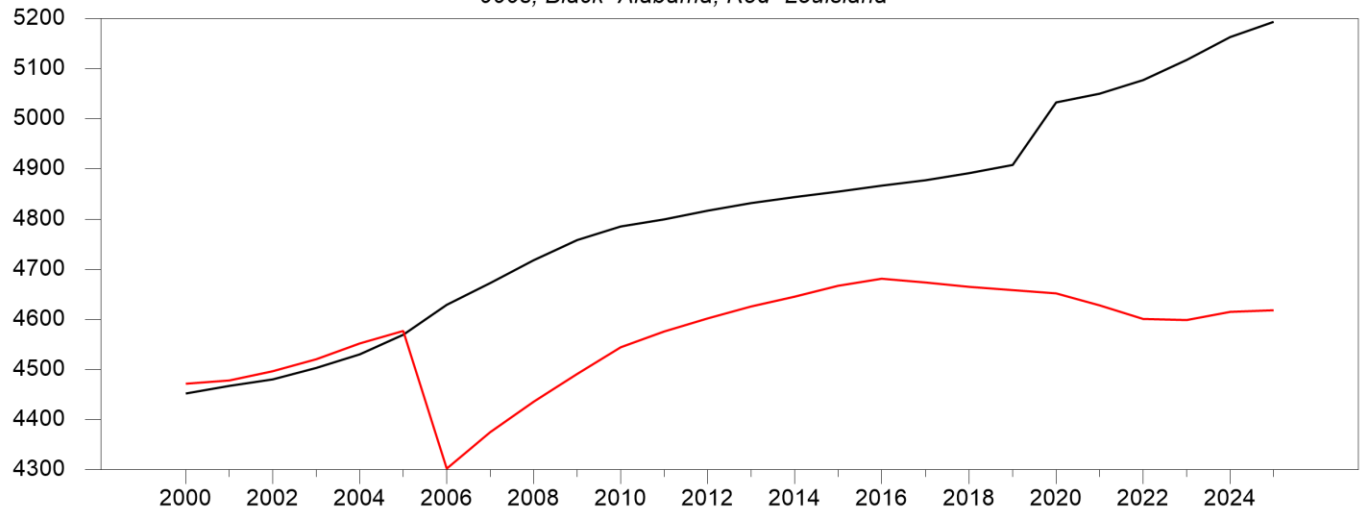
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Appendix B: Plots of Louisiana Population vs Each State of the SEC

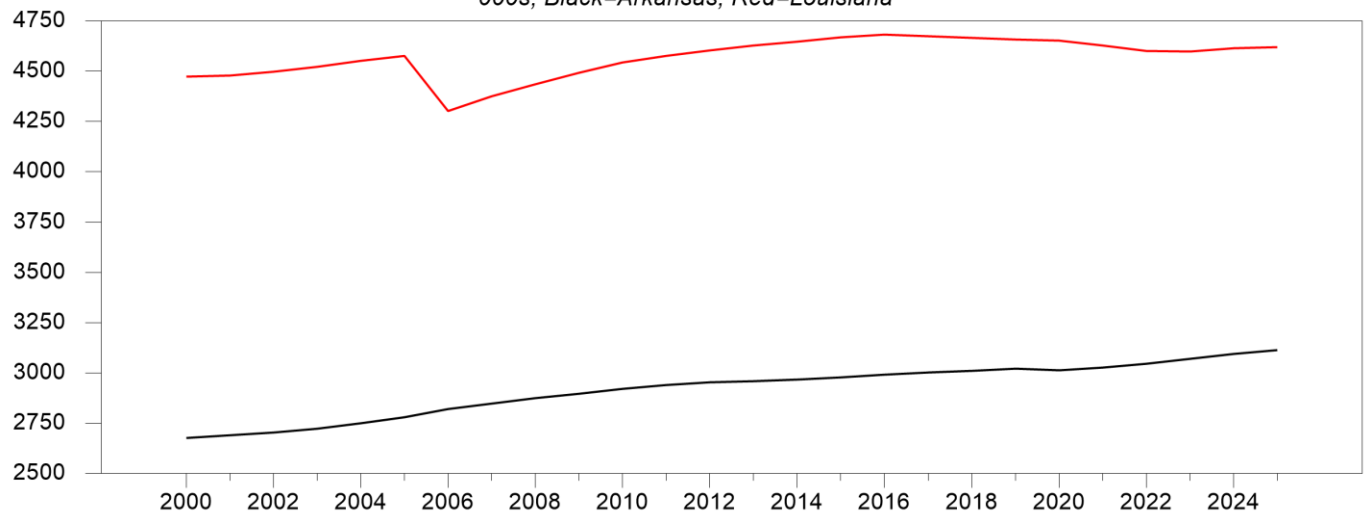
Louisiana vs Alabama Population

000s, Black=Alabama, Red=Louisiana



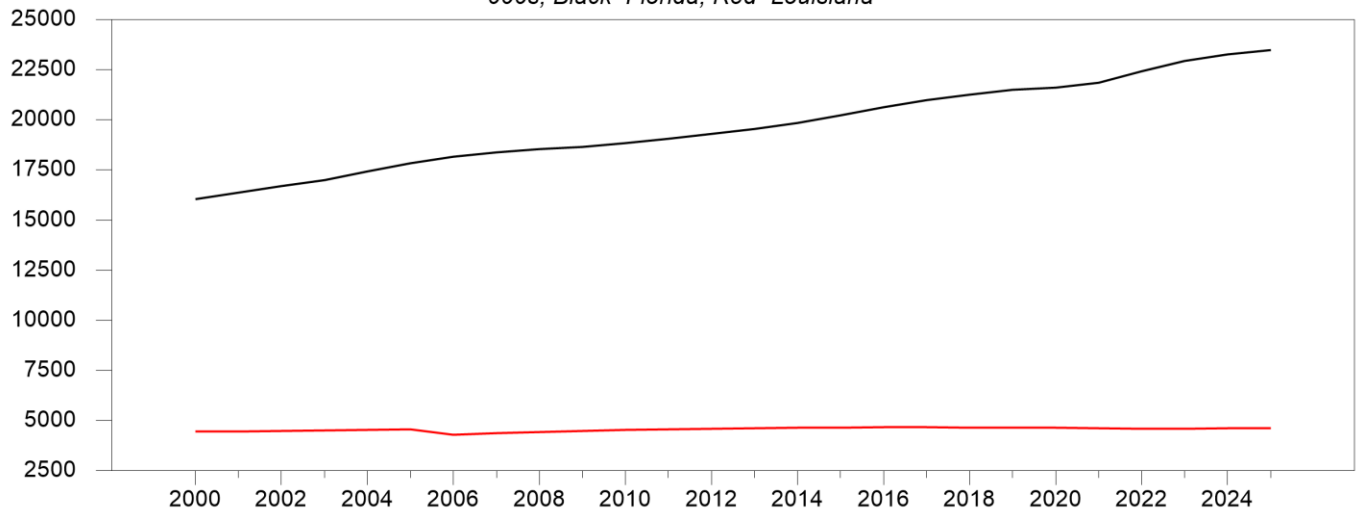
Louisiana vs Arkansas Population

000s, Black=Arkansas, Red=Louisiana



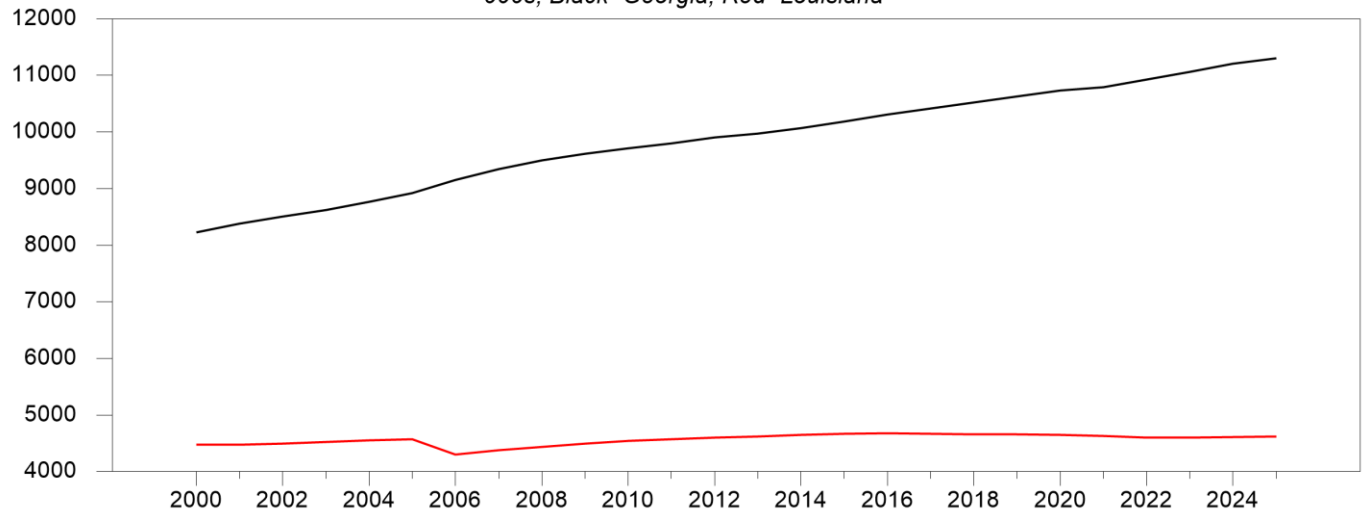
Louisiana vs Florida Population

000s, Black=Florida, Red=Louisiana



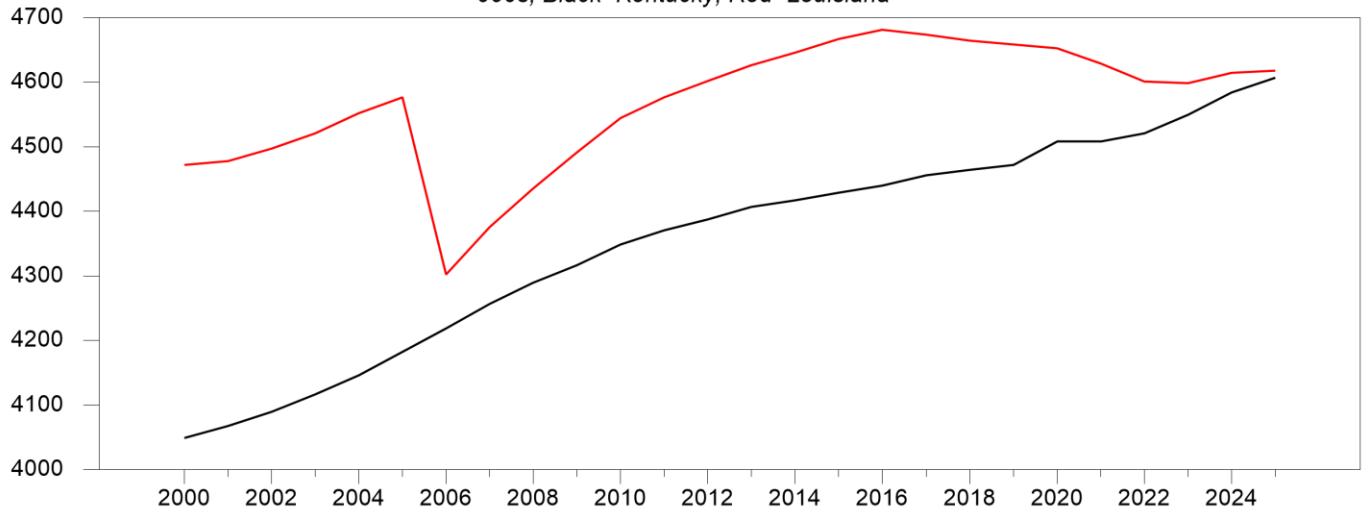
Louisiana vs Georgia Population

000s, Black=Georgia, Red=Louisiana



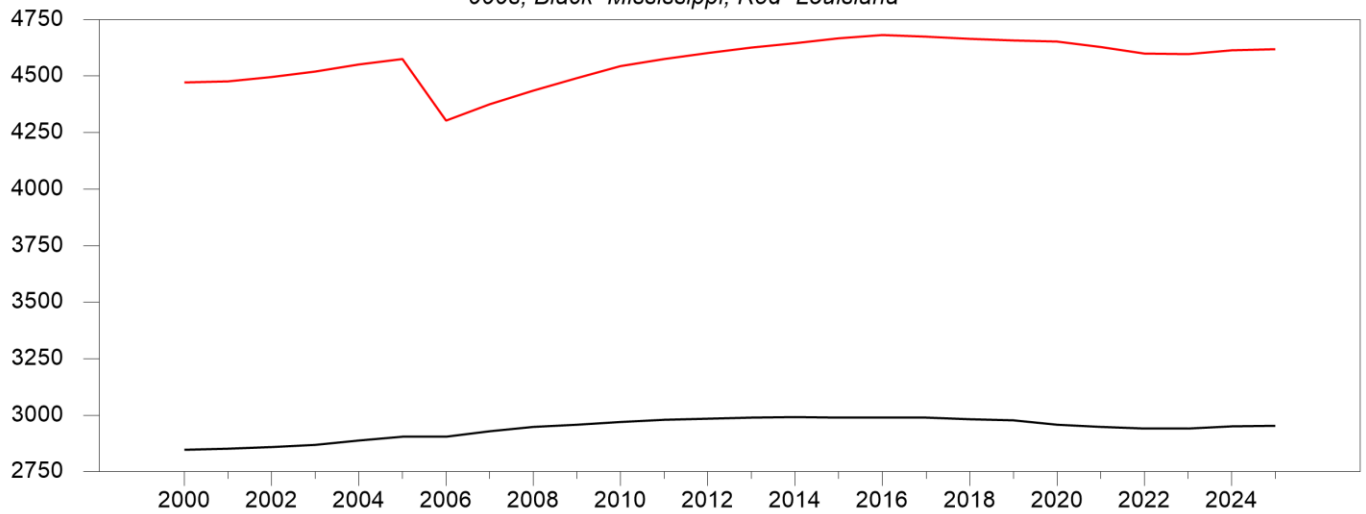
Louisiana vs Kentucky Population

000s, Black=Kentucky, Red=Louisiana



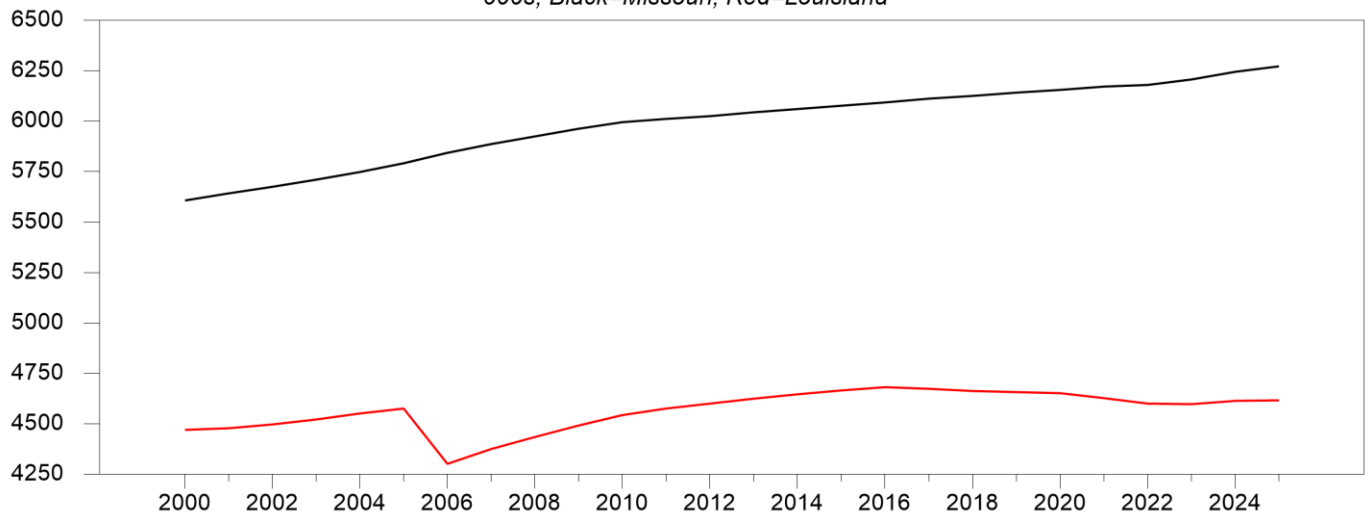
Louisiana vs Mississippi Population

000s, Black=Mississippi, Red=Louisiana



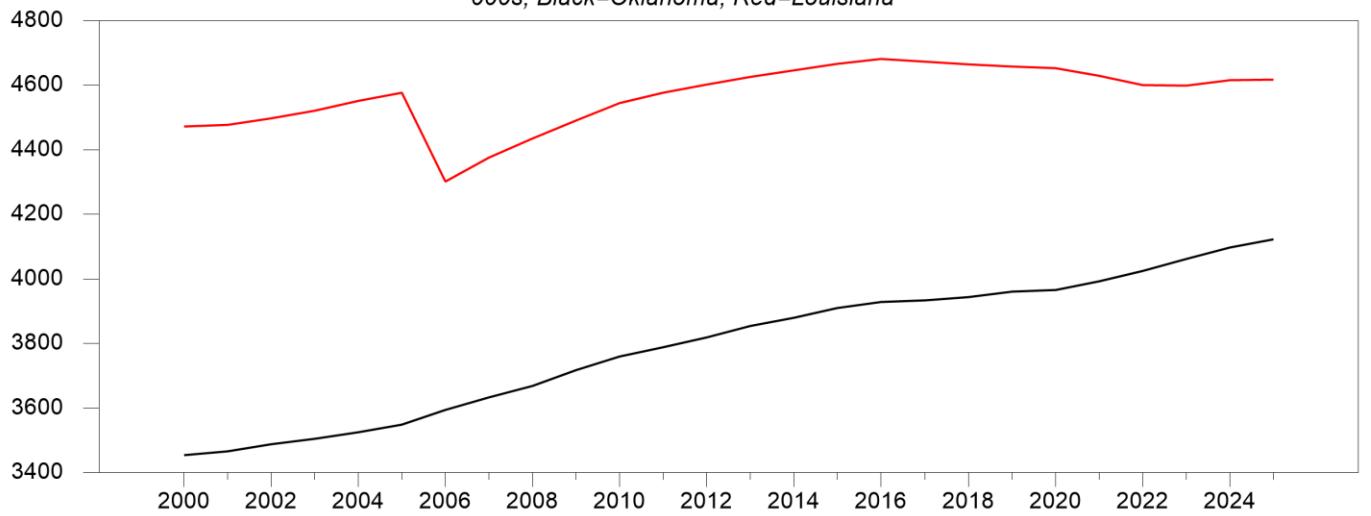
Louisiana vs Missouri Population

000s, Black=Missouri, Red=Louisiana



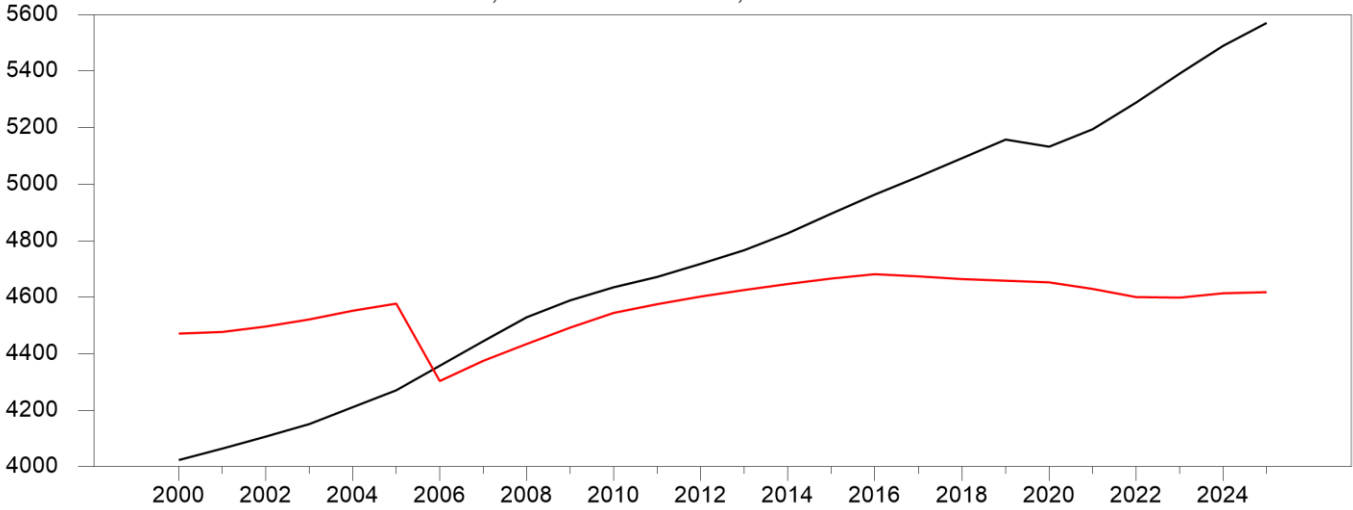
Louisiana vs Oklahoma Population

000s, Black=Oklahoma, Red=Louisiana



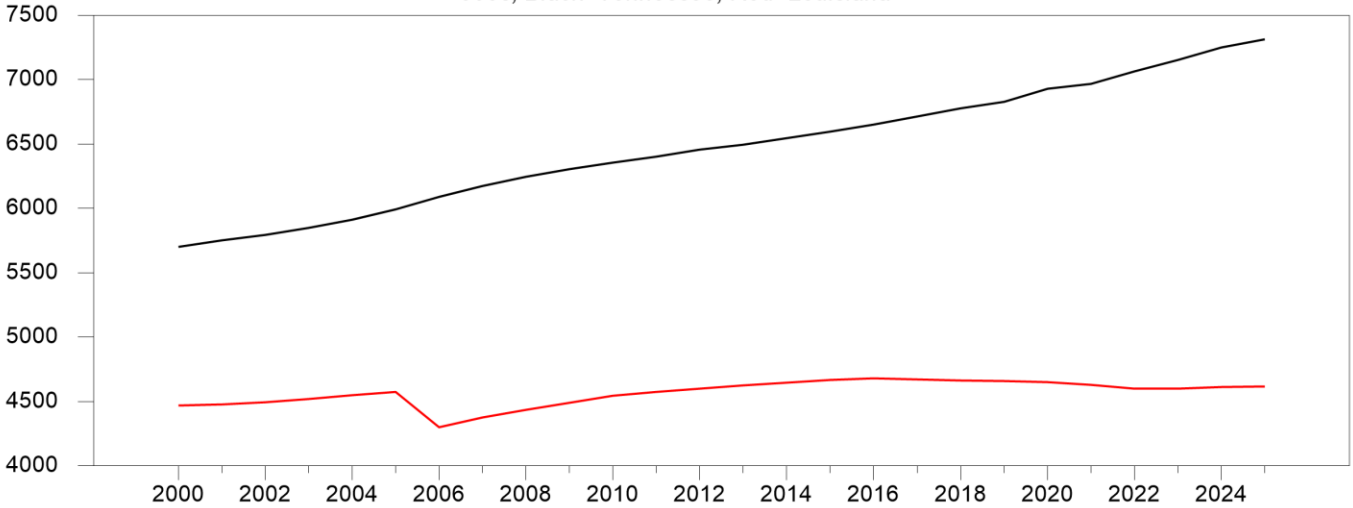
Louisiana vs South Carolina Population

000s, Black=South Carolina, Red=Louisiana



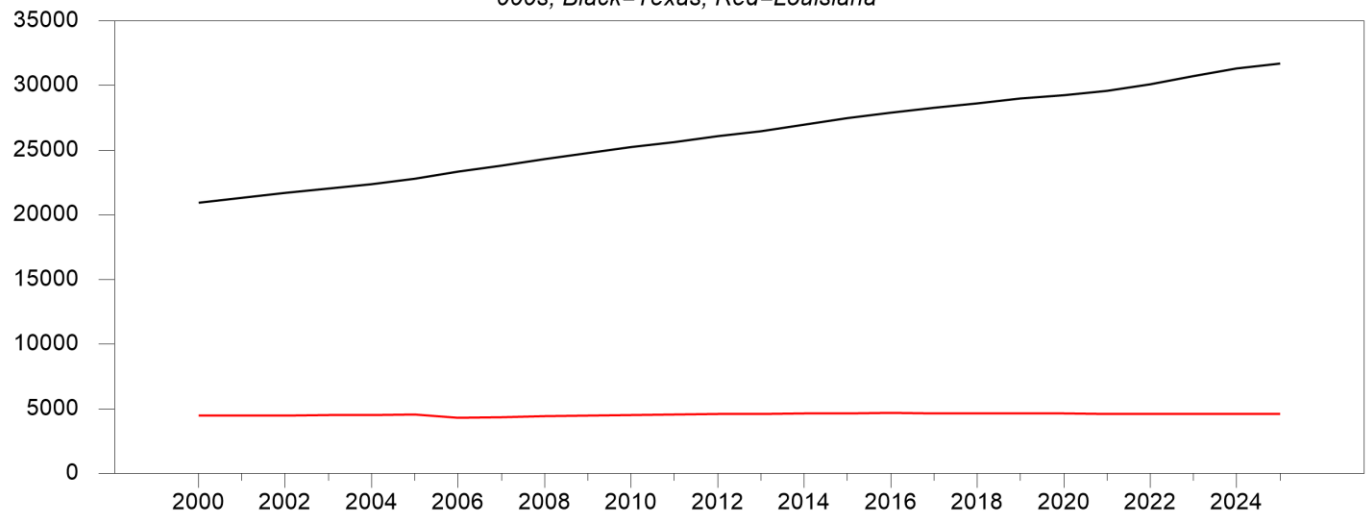
Louisiana vs Tennessee Population

000s, Black=Tennessee, Red=Louisiana

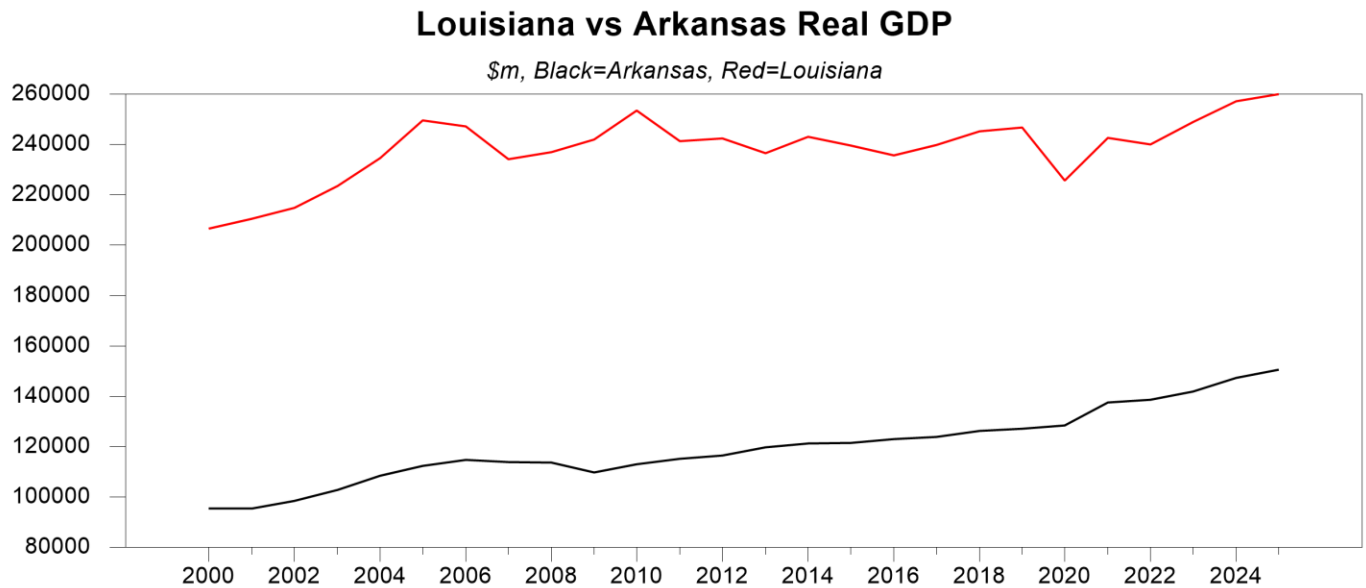
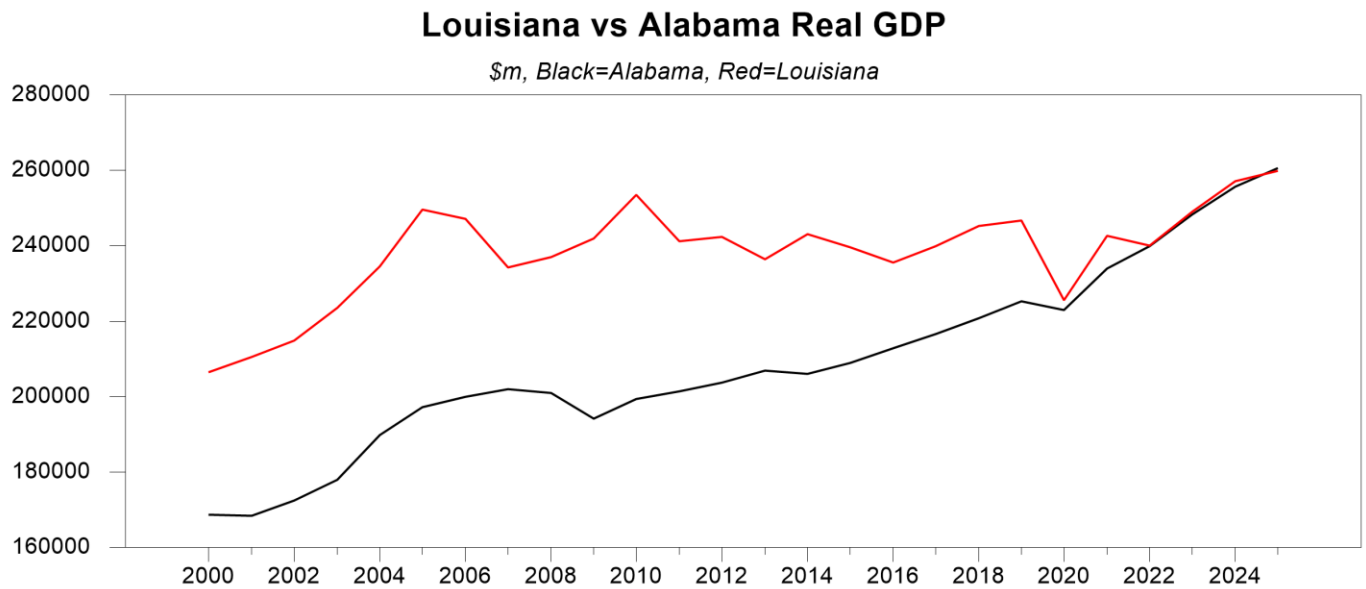


Louisiana vs Texas Population

000s, Black=Texas, Red=Louisiana

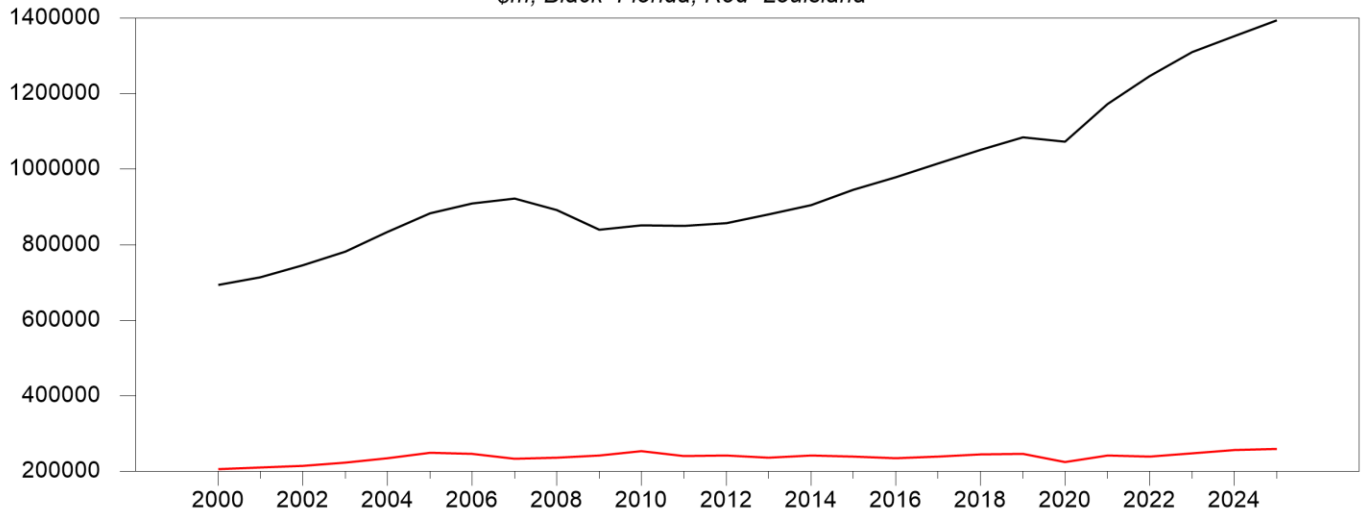


Appendix C: Plots of Louisiana Real GDP vs Each State of the SEC



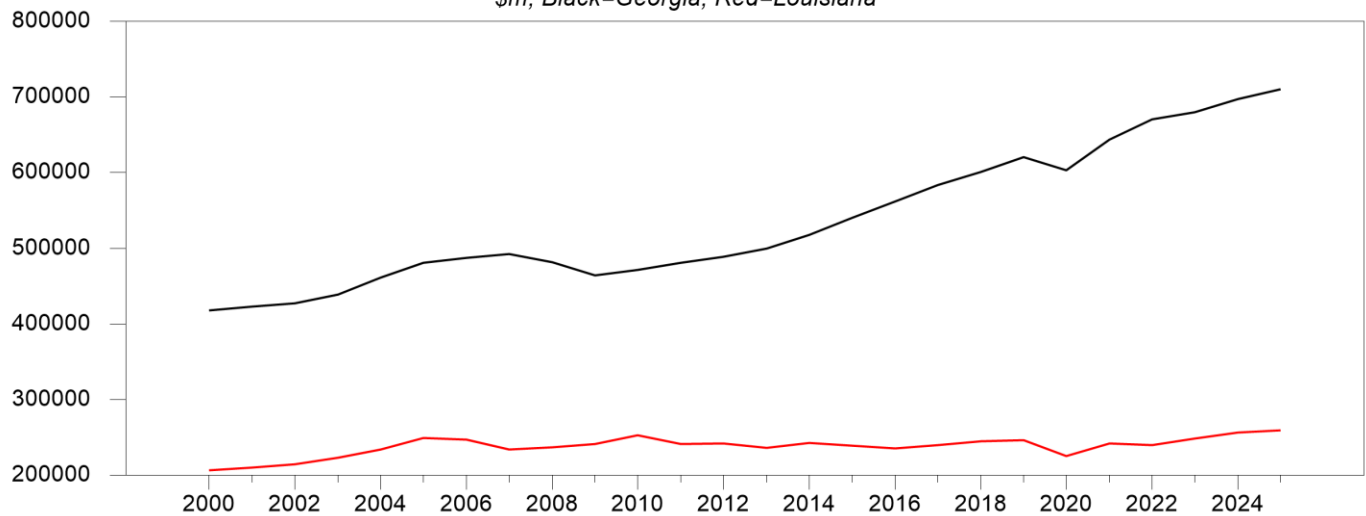
Louisiana vs Florida Real GDP

\$m, Black=Florida, Red=Louisiana



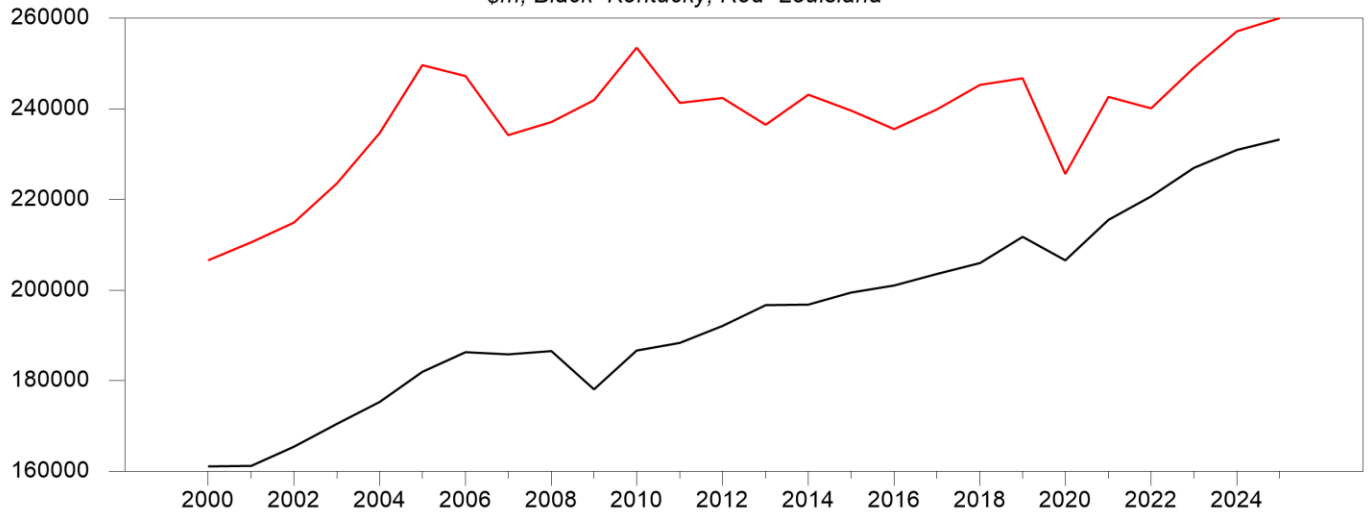
Louisiana vs Georgia Real GDP

\$m, Black=Georgia, Red=Louisiana



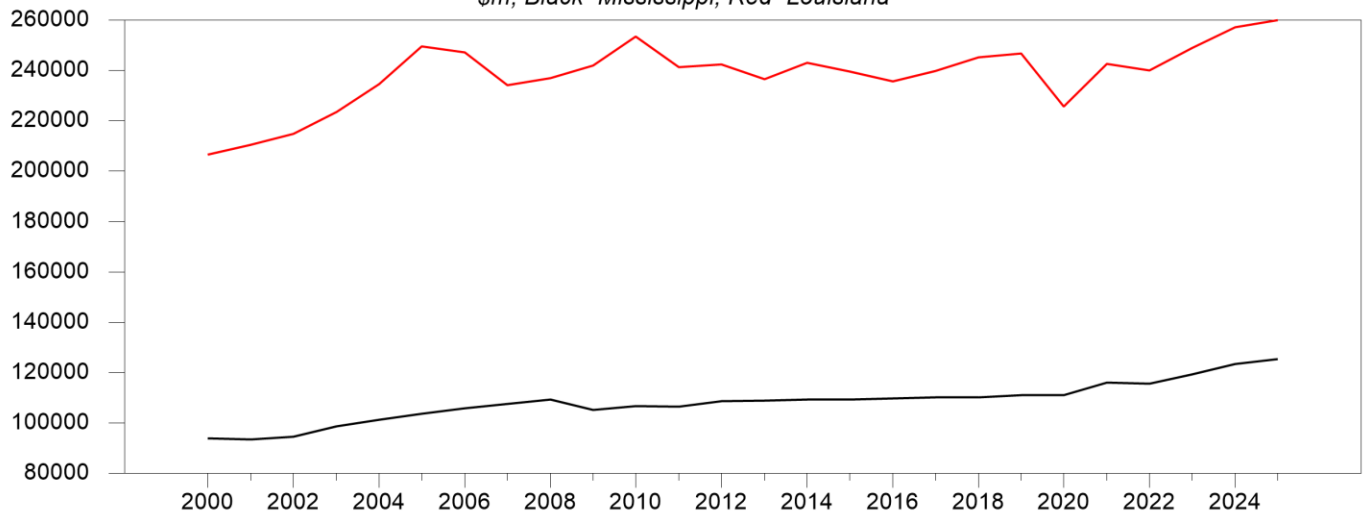
Louisiana vs Kentucky Real GDP

\$m, Black=Kentucky, Red=Louisiana



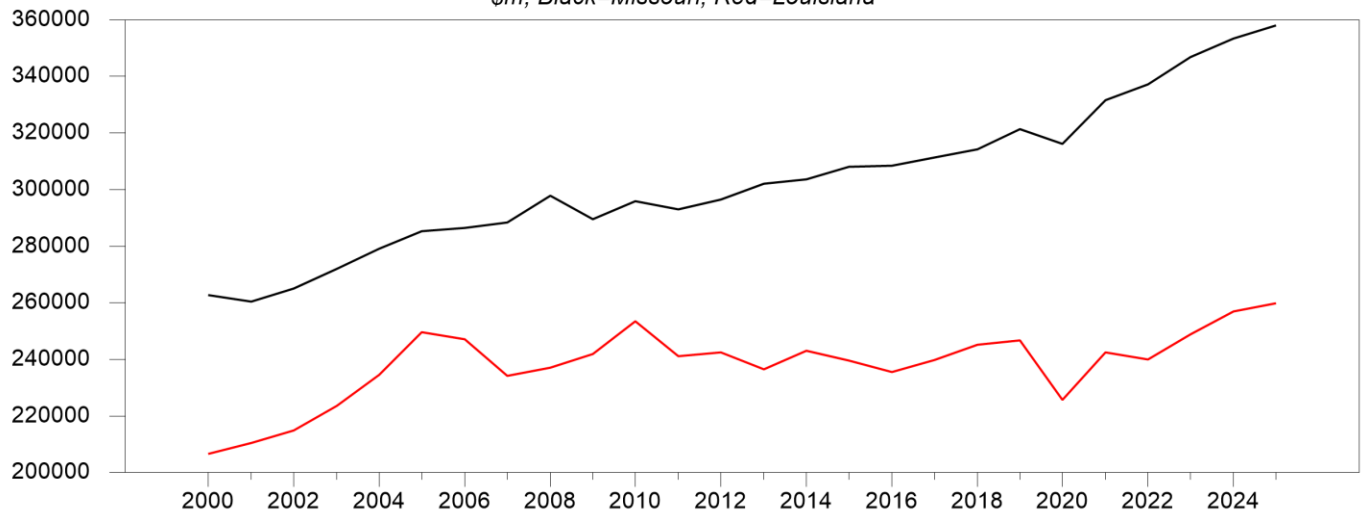
Louisiana vs Mississippi Real GDP

\$m, Black=Mississippi, Red=Louisiana



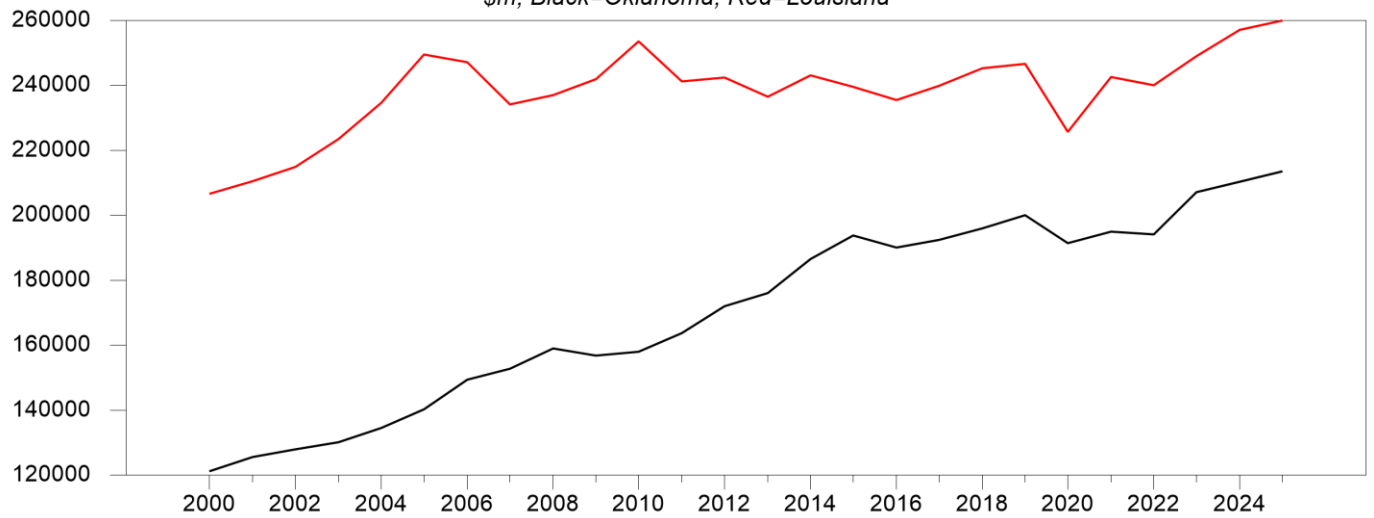
Louisiana vs Missouri Real GDP

\$m, Black=Missouri, Red=Louisiana



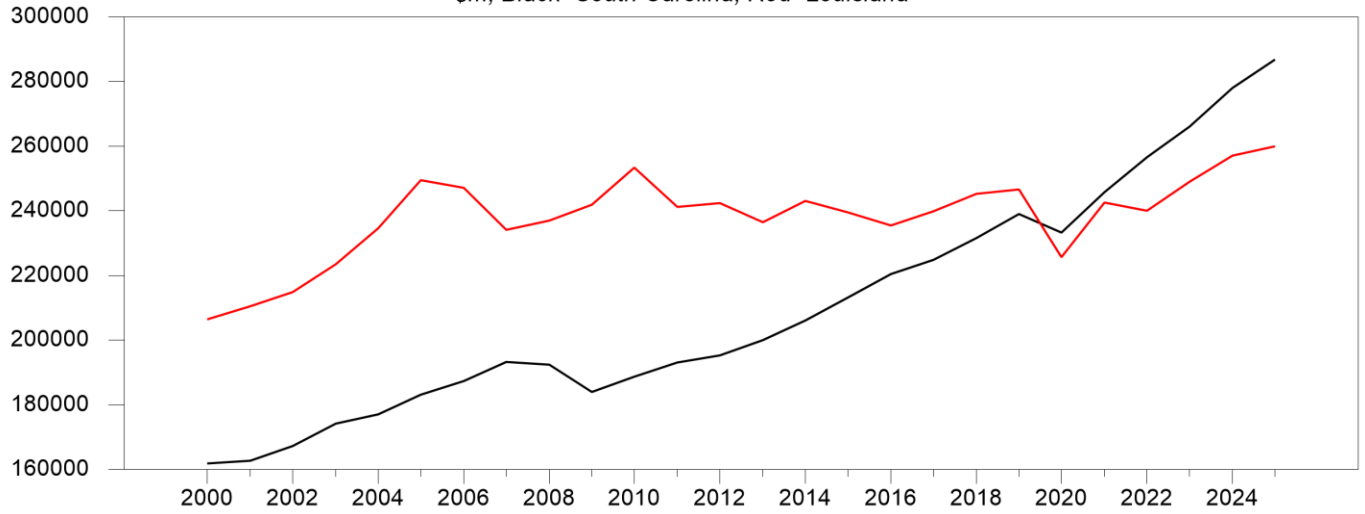
Louisiana vs Oklahoma Real GDP

\$m, Black=Oklahoma, Red=Louisiana



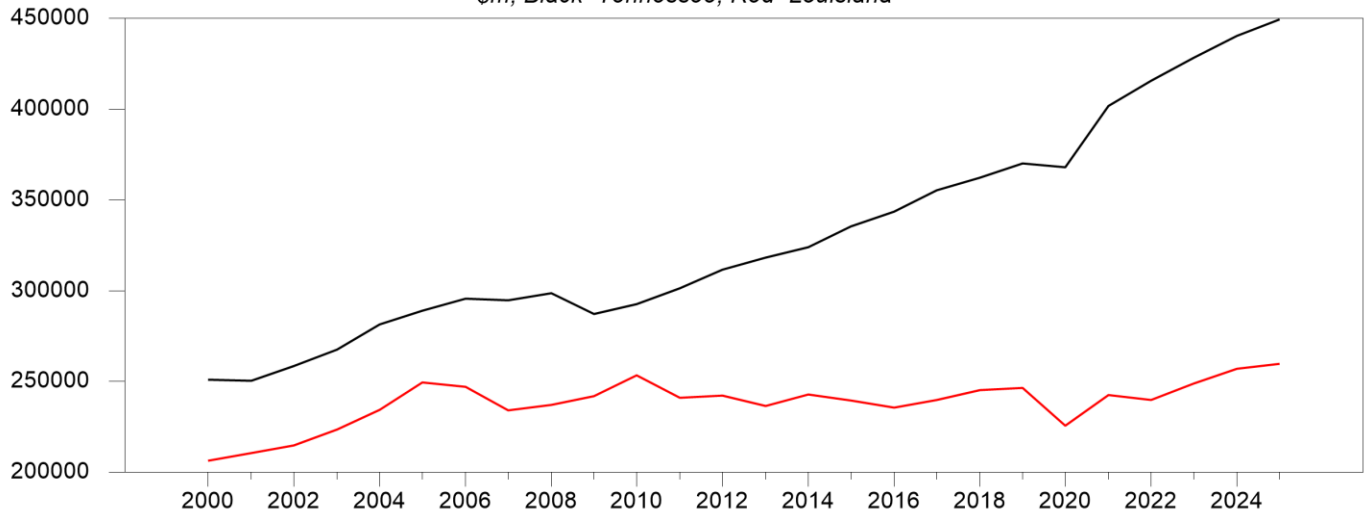
Louisiana vs South Carolina Real GDP

\$m, Black=South Carolina, Red=Louisiana



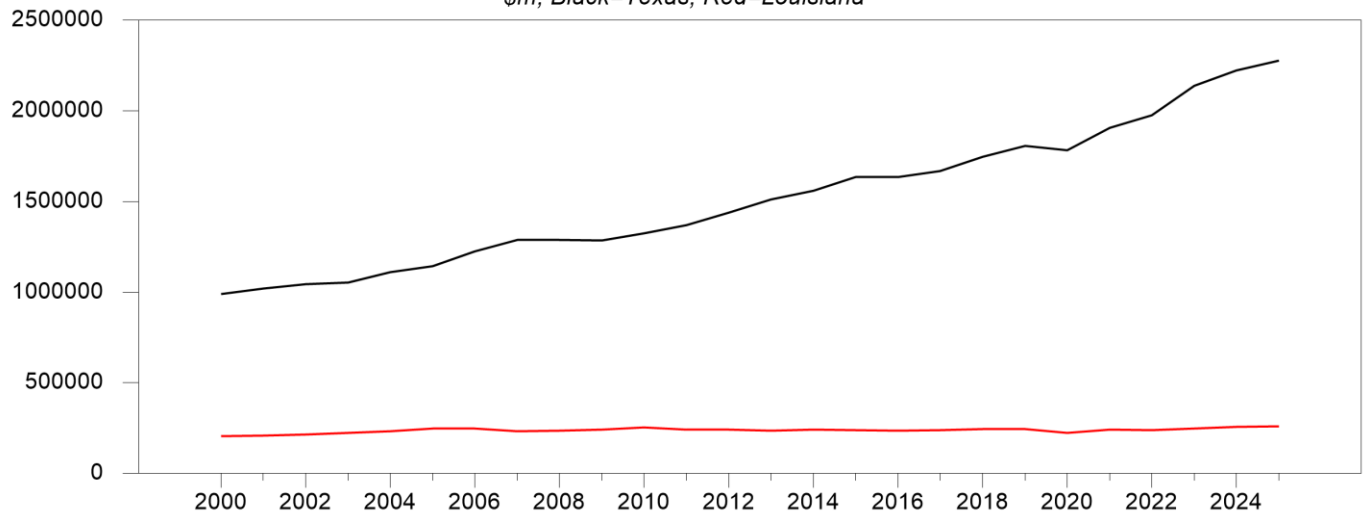
Louisiana vs Tennessee Real GDP

\$m, Black=Tennessee, Red=Louisiana

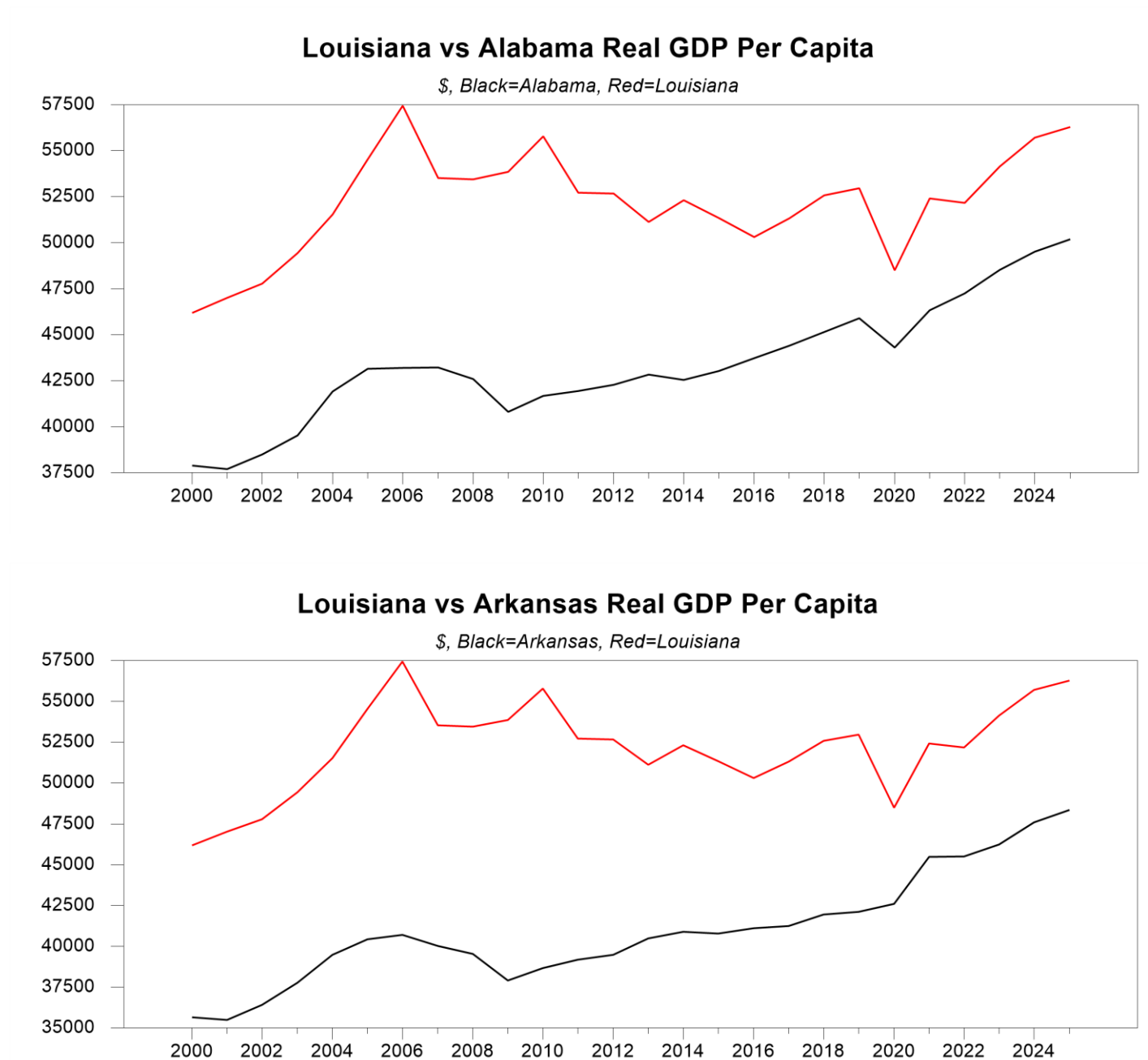


Louisiana vs Texas Real GDP

\$m, Black=Texas, Red=Louisiana

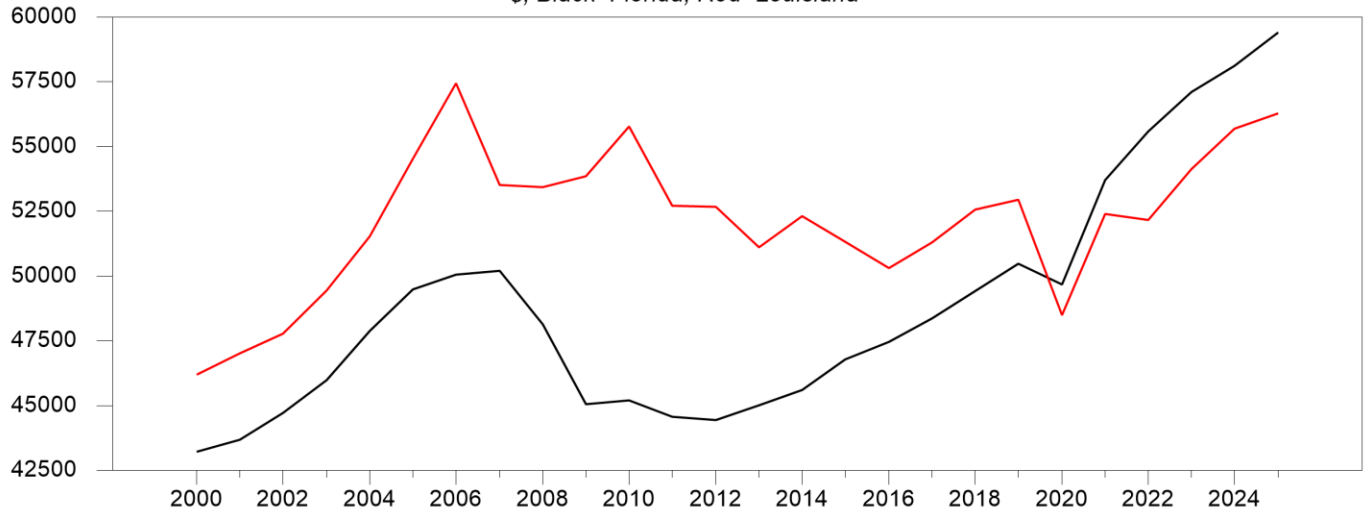


Appendix D: Plots of Louisiana Real GDP per Capita vs Each State of the SEC and the U.S.



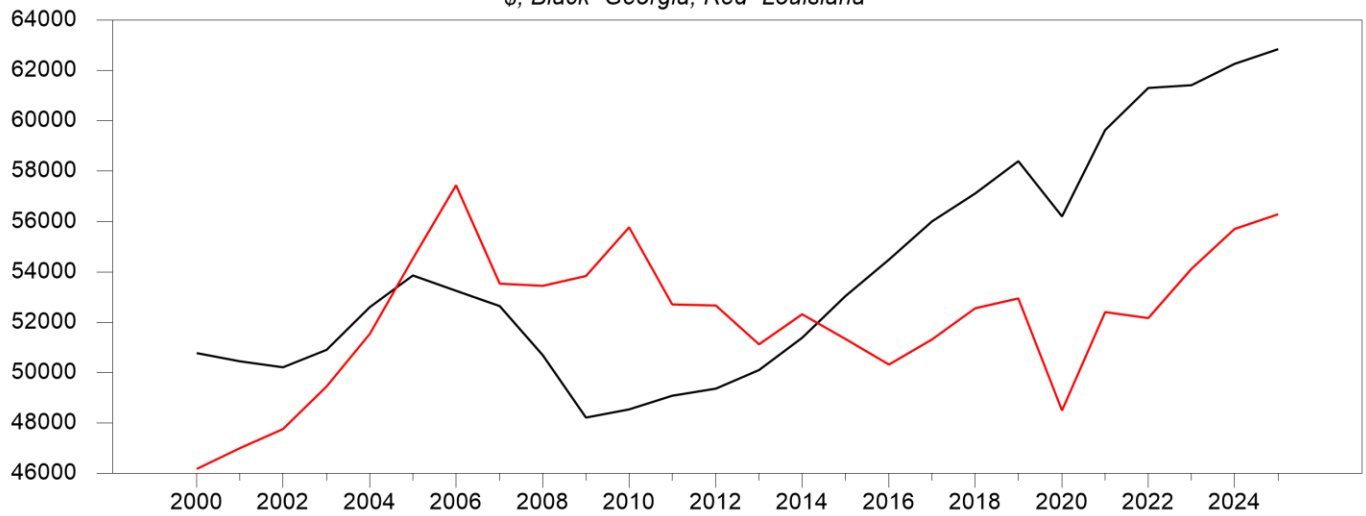
Louisiana vs Florida Real GDP Per Capita

\$, Black=Florida, Red=Louisiana



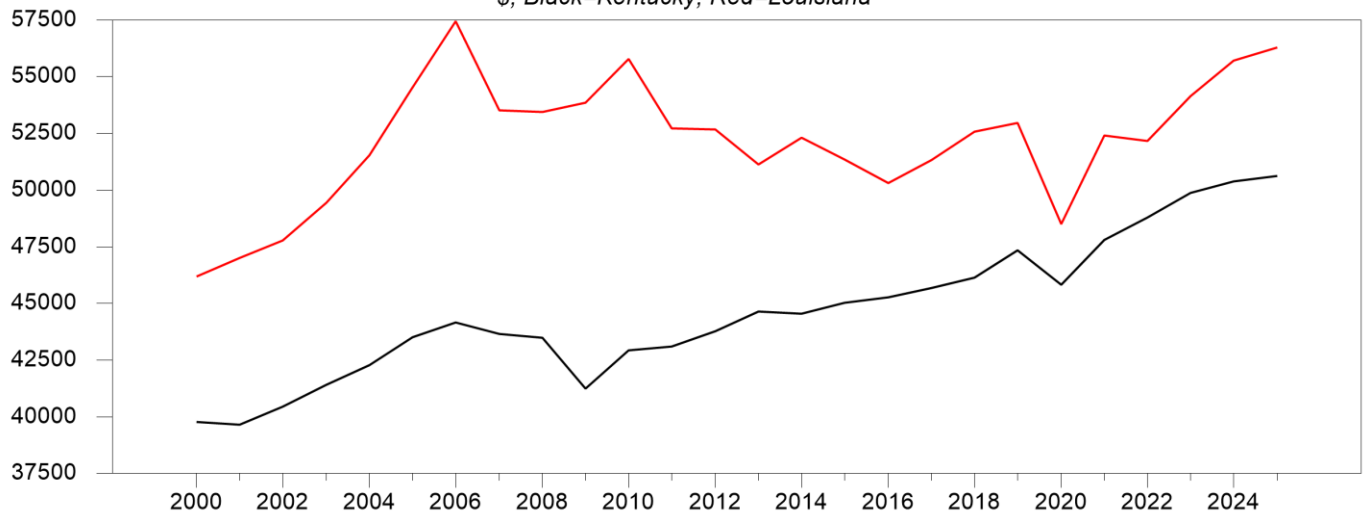
Louisiana vs Georgia Real GDP Per Capita

\$, Black=Georgia, Red=Louisiana



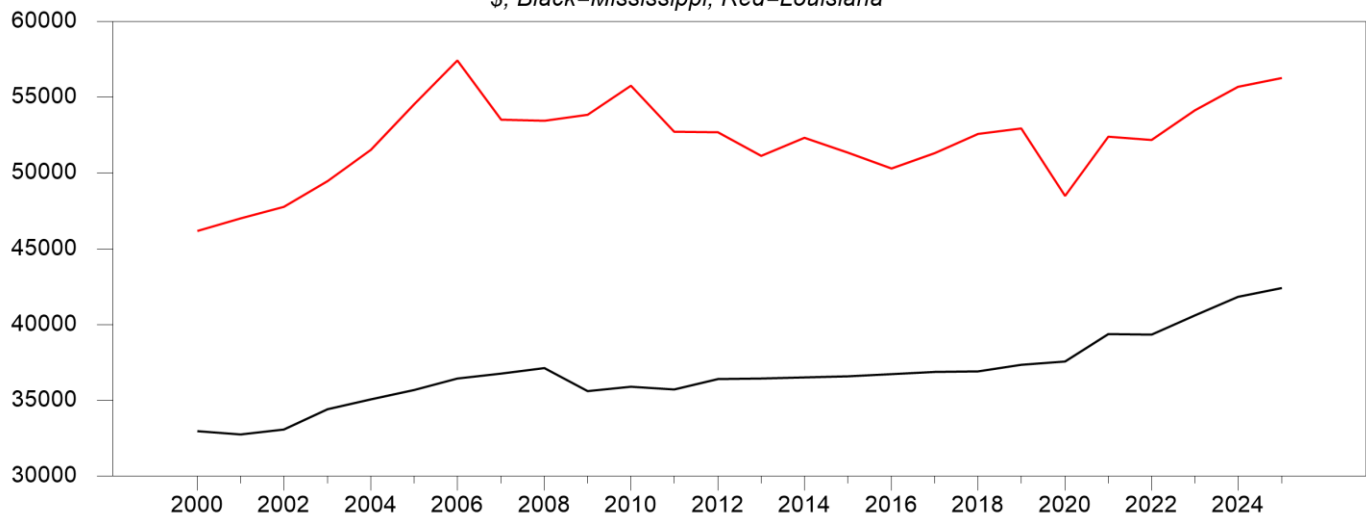
Louisiana vs Kentucky Real GDP Per Capita

\$, Black=Kentucky, Red=Louisiana



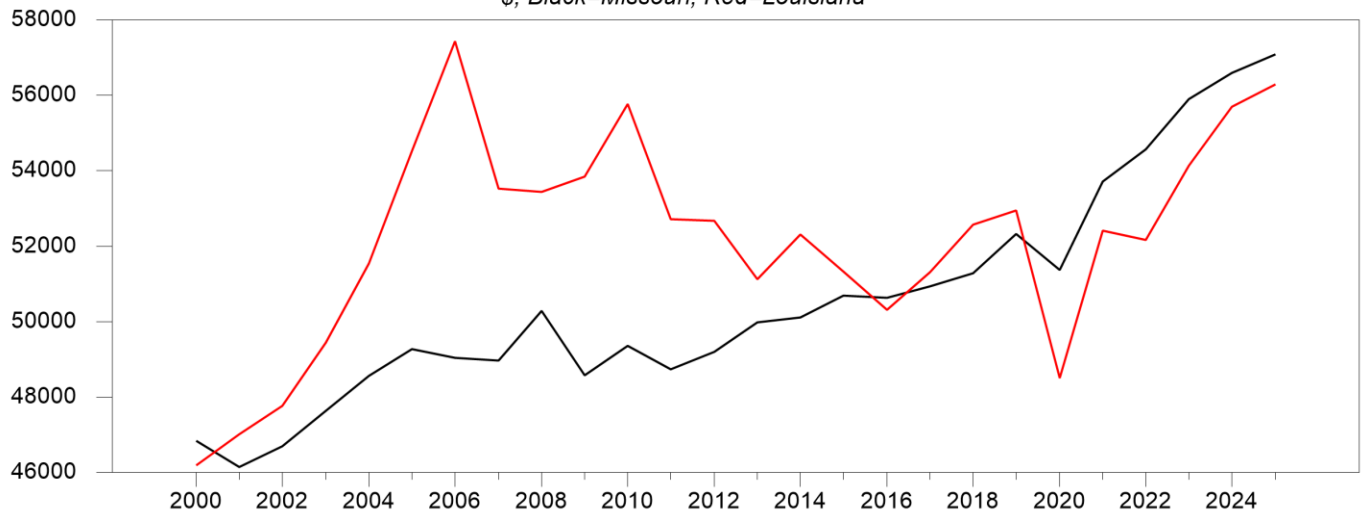
Louisiana vs Mississippi Real GDP Per Capita

\$, Black=Mississippi, Red=Louisiana



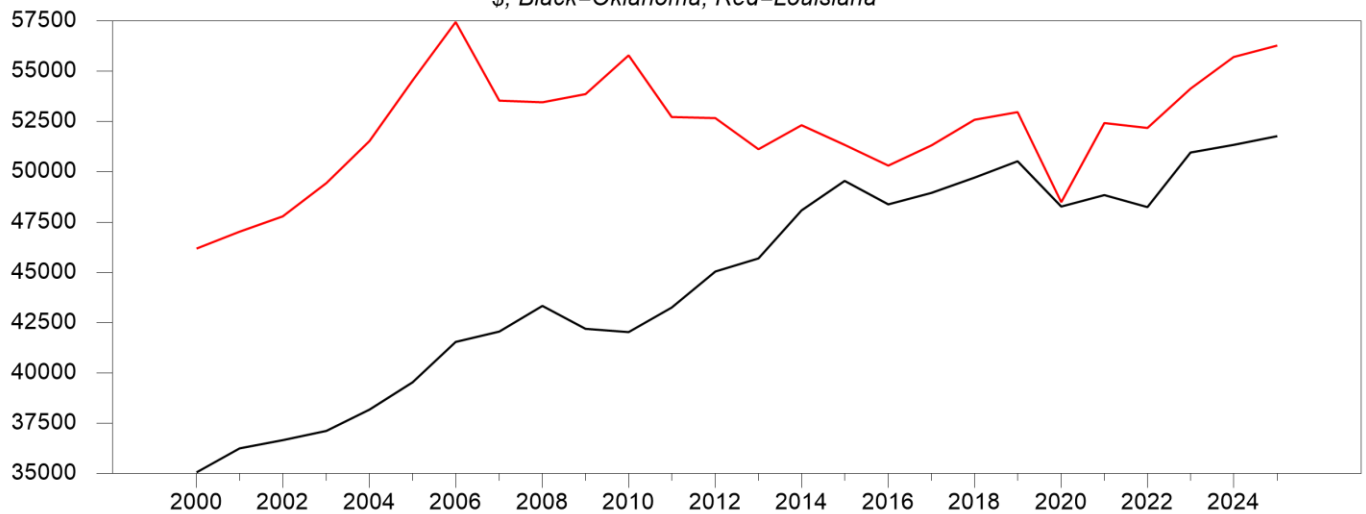
Louisiana vs Missouri Real GDP Per Capita

\$, Black=Missouri, Red=Louisiana

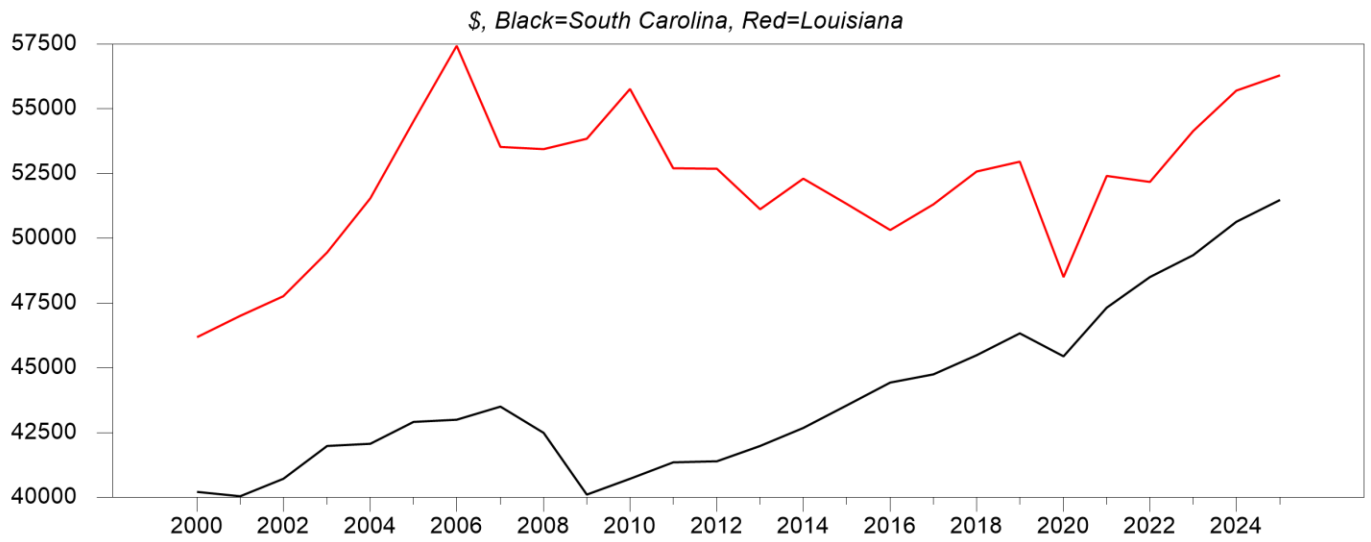


Louisiana vs Oklahoma Real GDP Per Capita

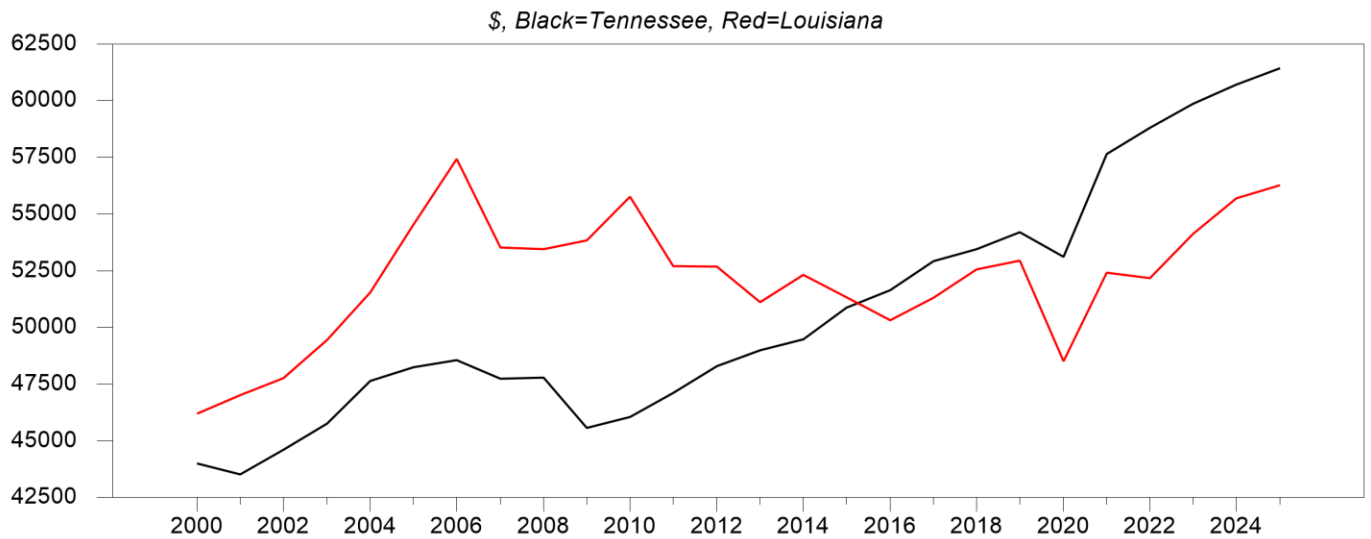
\$, Black=Oklahoma, Red=Louisiana



Louisiana vs South Carolina Real GDP Per Capita

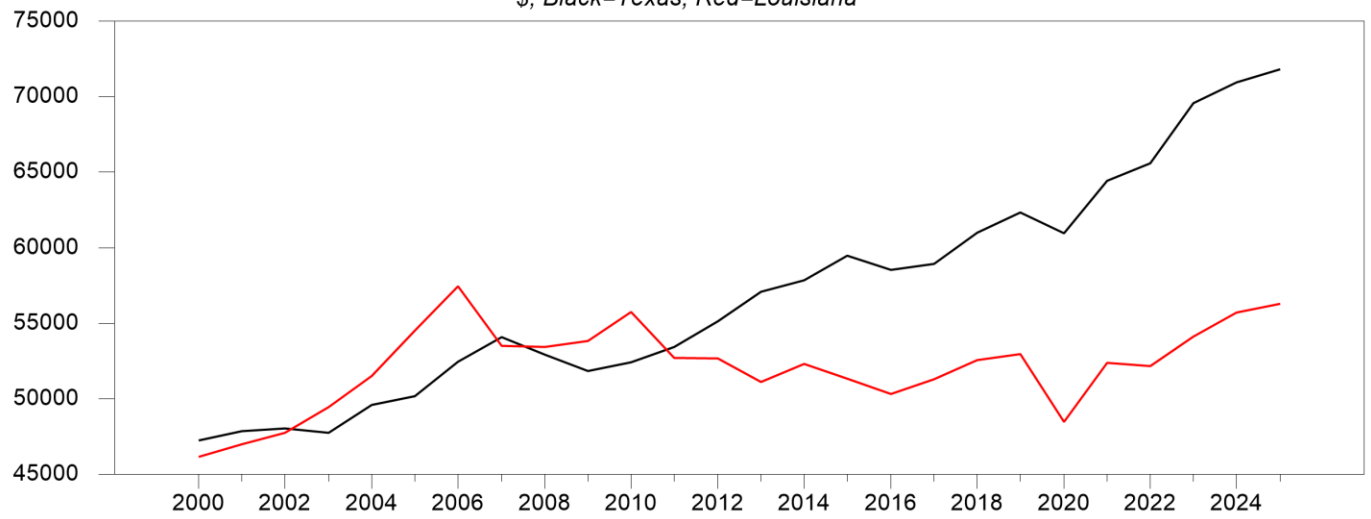


Louisiana vs Tennessee Real GDP Per Capita

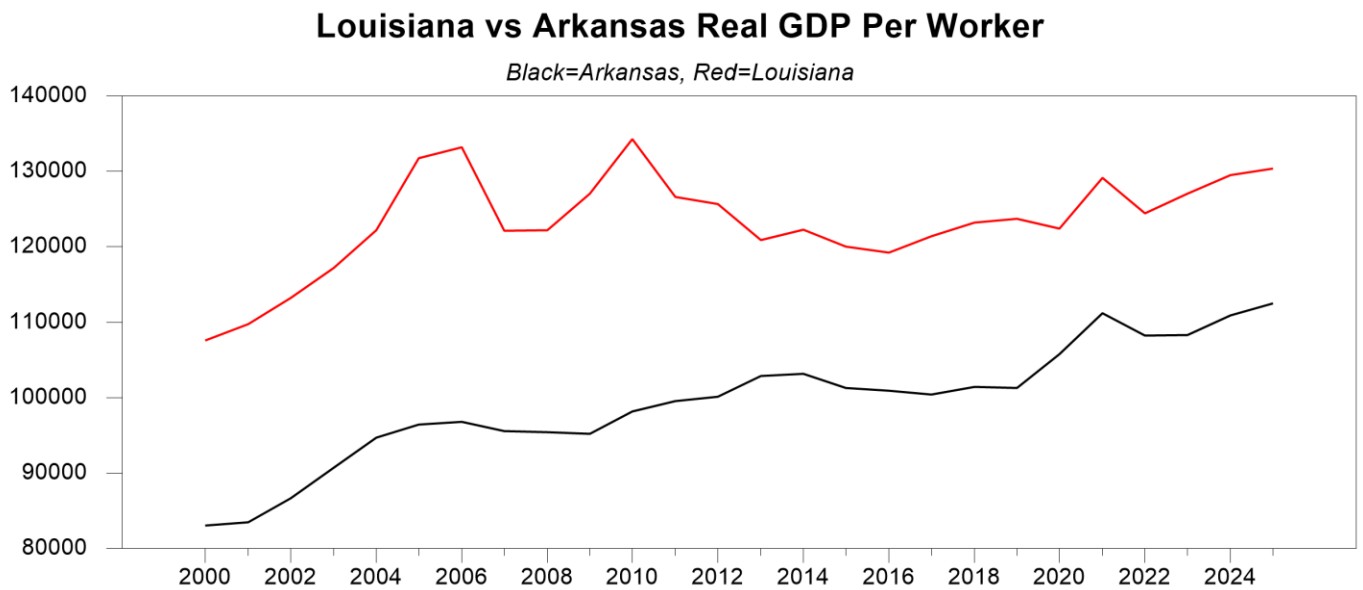
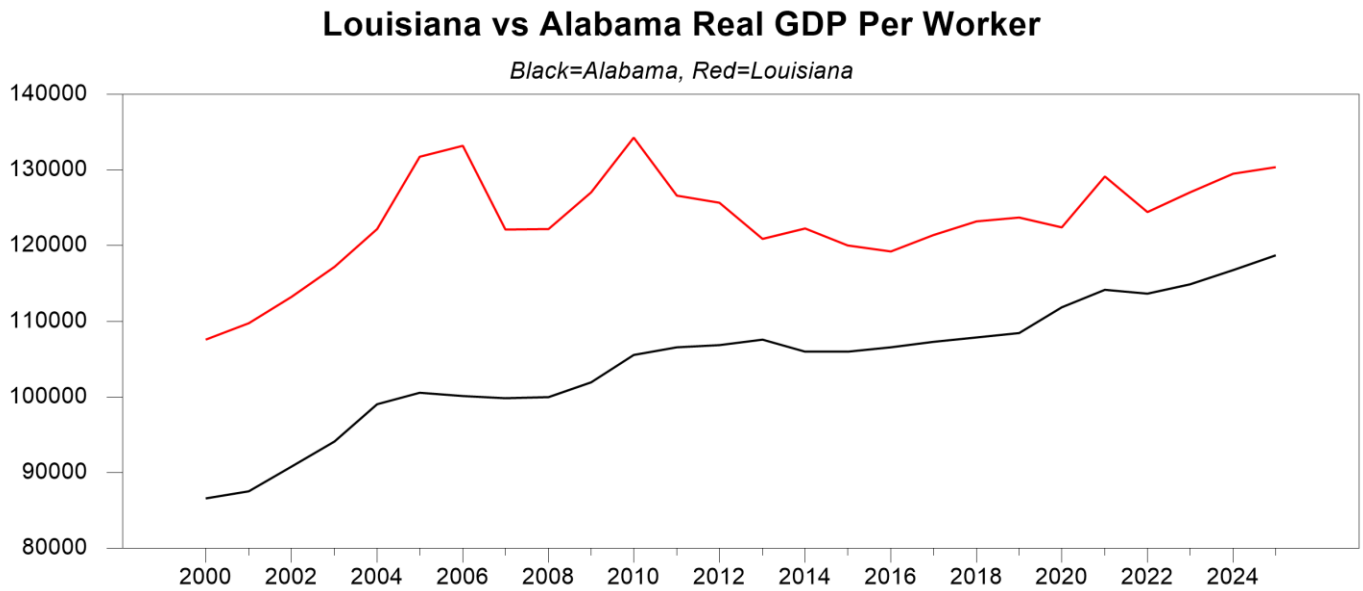


Louisiana vs Texas Real GDP Per Capita

\$, Black=Texas, Red=Louisiana

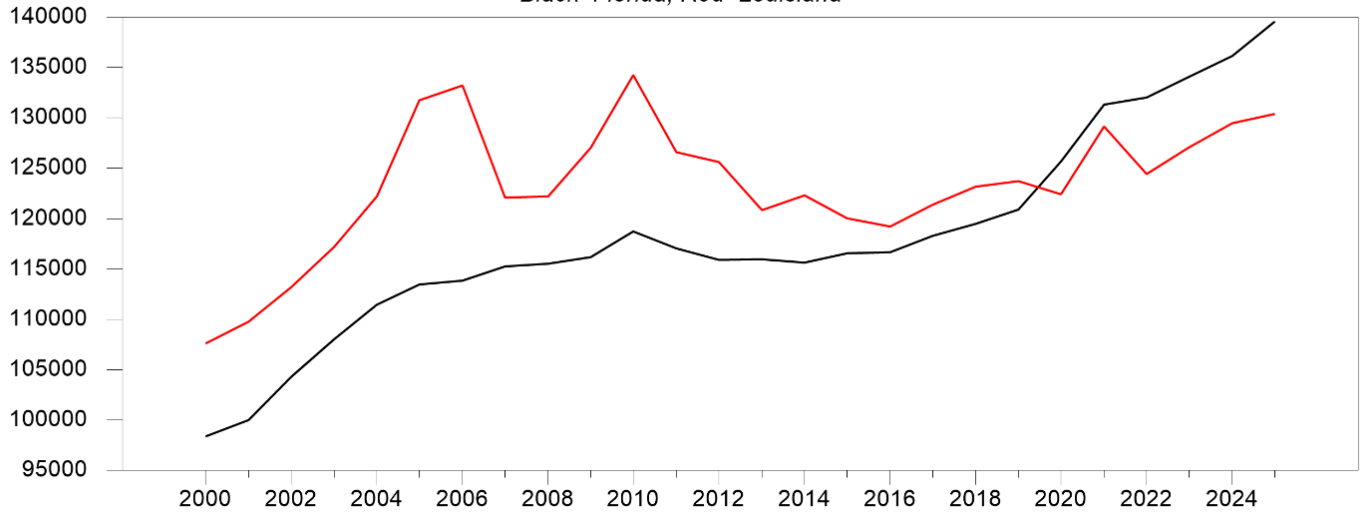


Appendix E: Plots of Louisiana Real GDP per Worker vs Each State of the SEC



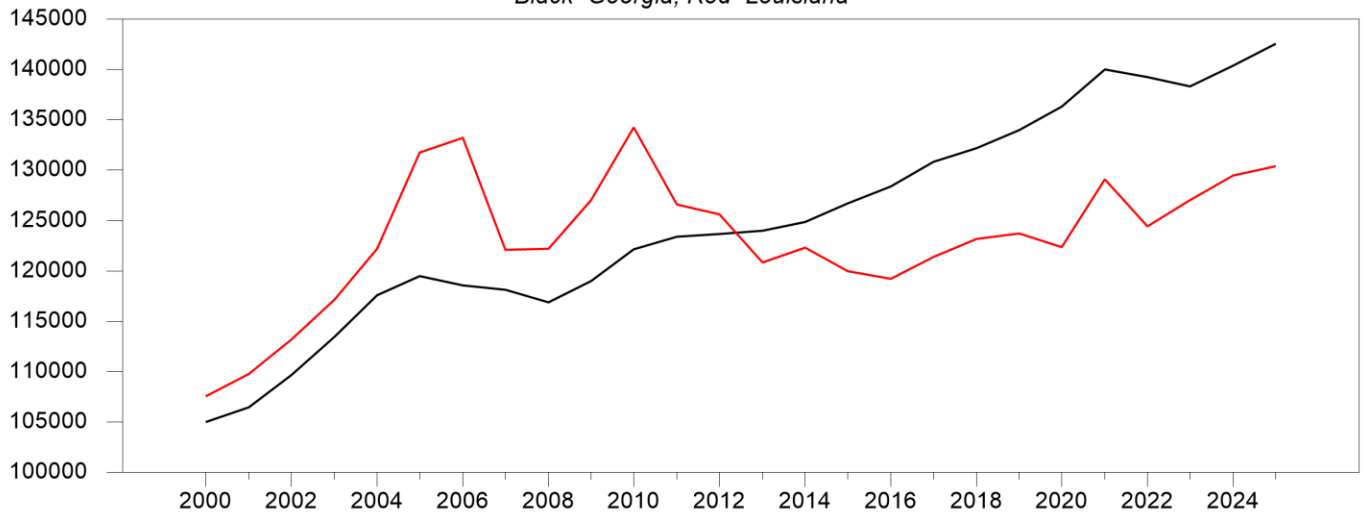
Louisiana vs Florida Real GDP Per Worker

Black=Florida, Red=Louisiana



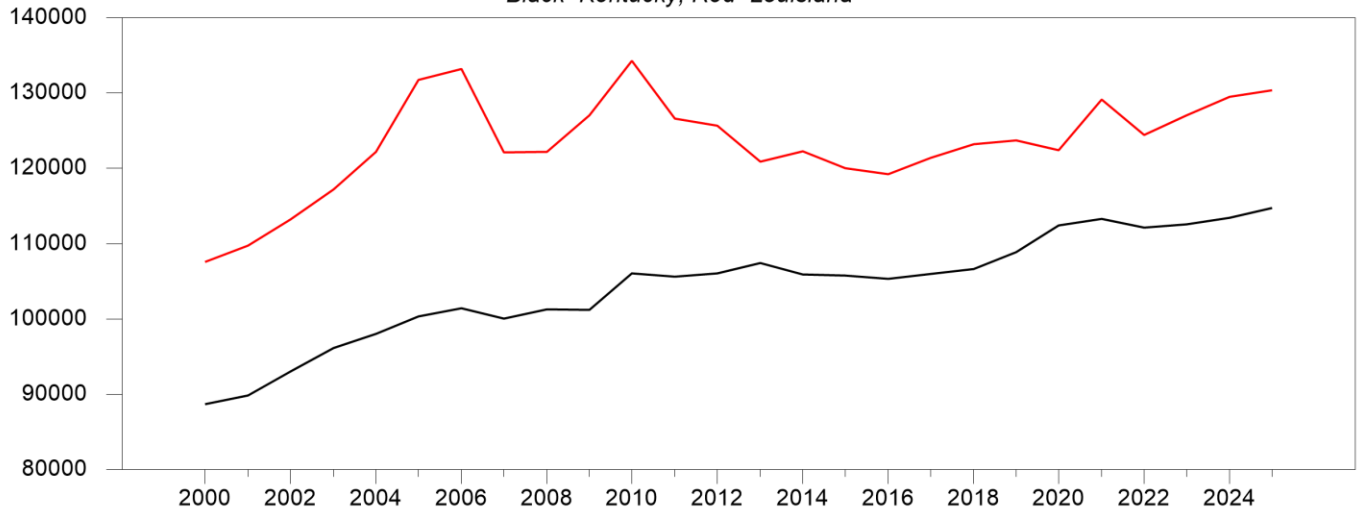
Louisiana vs Georgia Real GDP Per Worker

Black=Georgia, Red=Louisiana



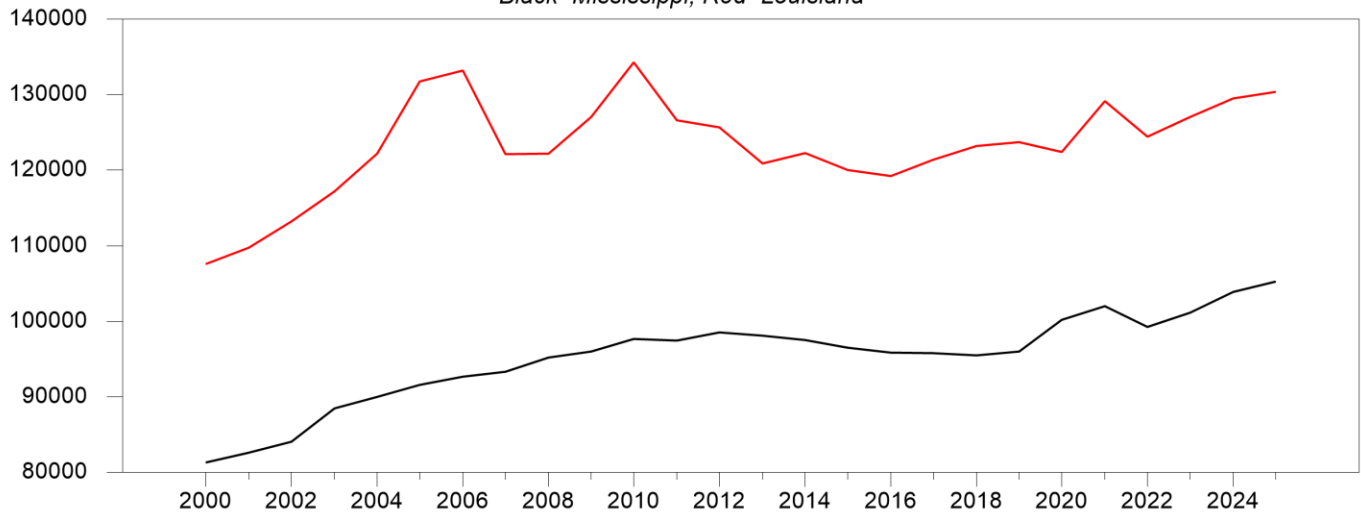
Louisiana vs Kentucky Real GDP Per Worker

Black=Kentucky, Red=Louisiana



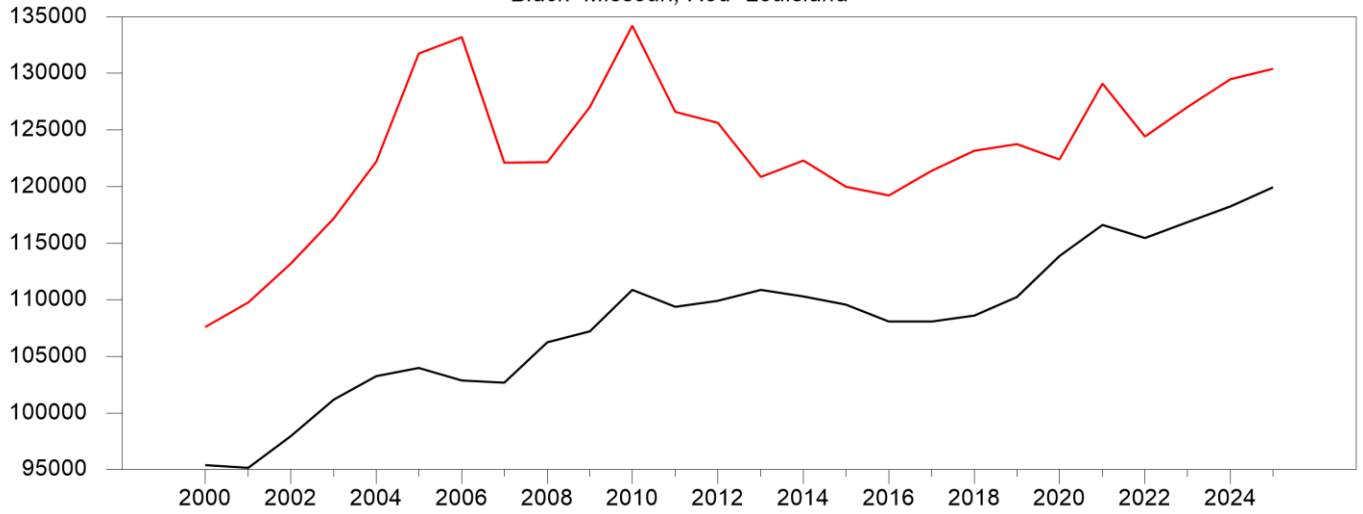
Louisiana vs Mississippi Real GDP Per Worker

Black=Mississippi, Red=Louisiana



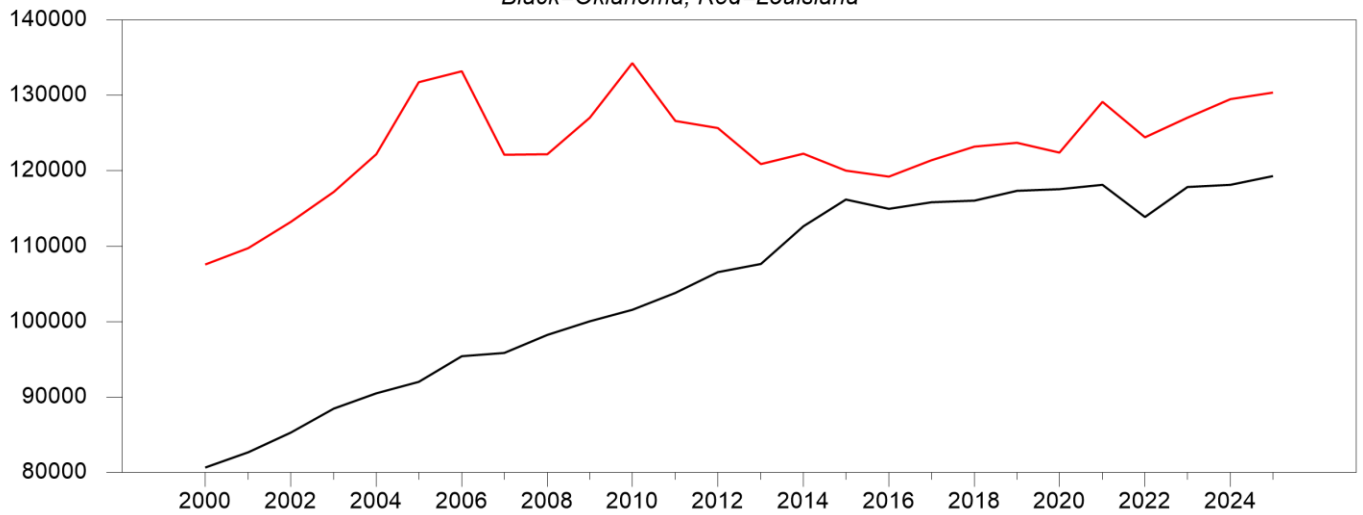
Louisiana vs Missouri Real GDP Per Worker

Black=Missouri, Red=Louisiana



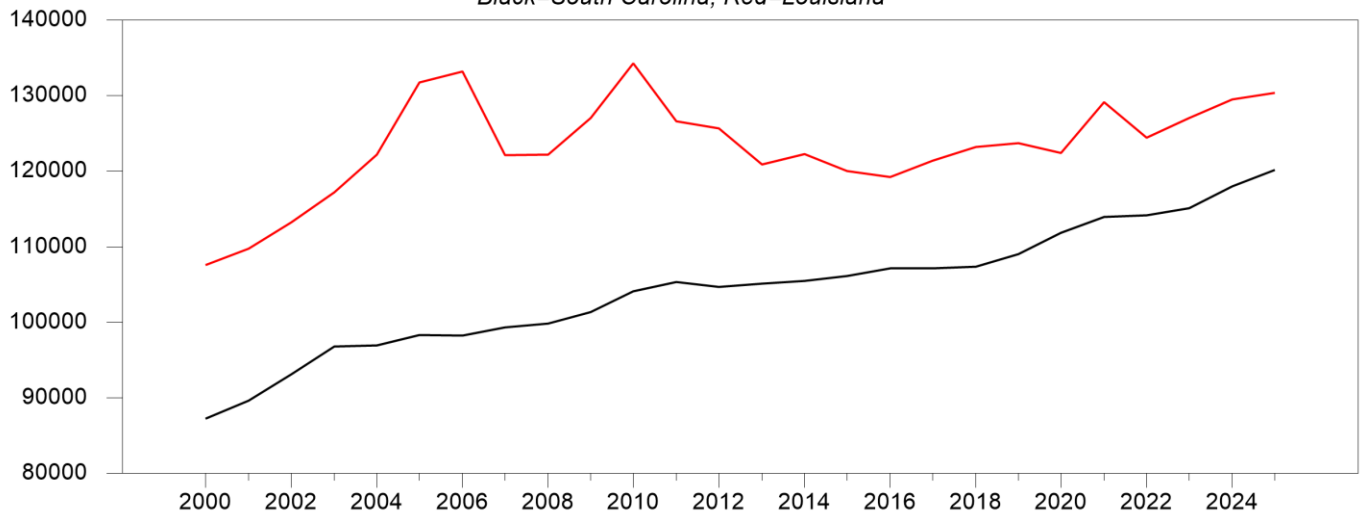
Louisiana vs Oklahoma Real GDP Per Worker

Black=Oklahoma, Red=Louisiana



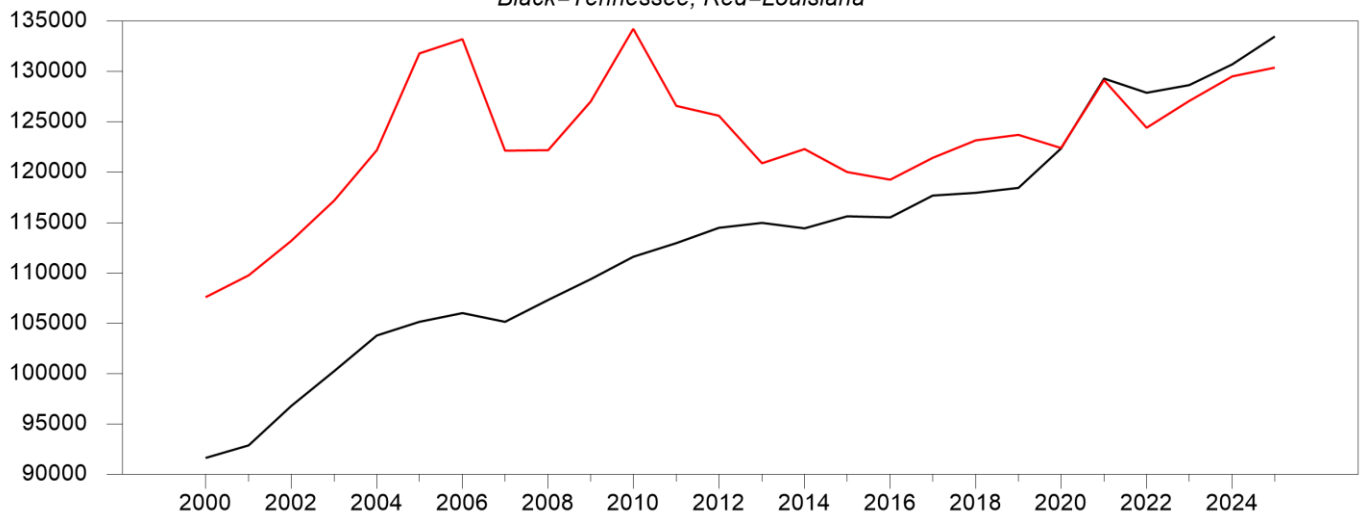
Louisiana vs South Carolina Real GDP Per Worker

Black=South Carolina, Red=Louisiana



Louisiana vs Tennessee Real GDP Per Worker

Black=Tennessee, Red=Louisiana



Louisiana vs Texas Real GDP Per Worker

Black=Texas, Red=Louisiana

