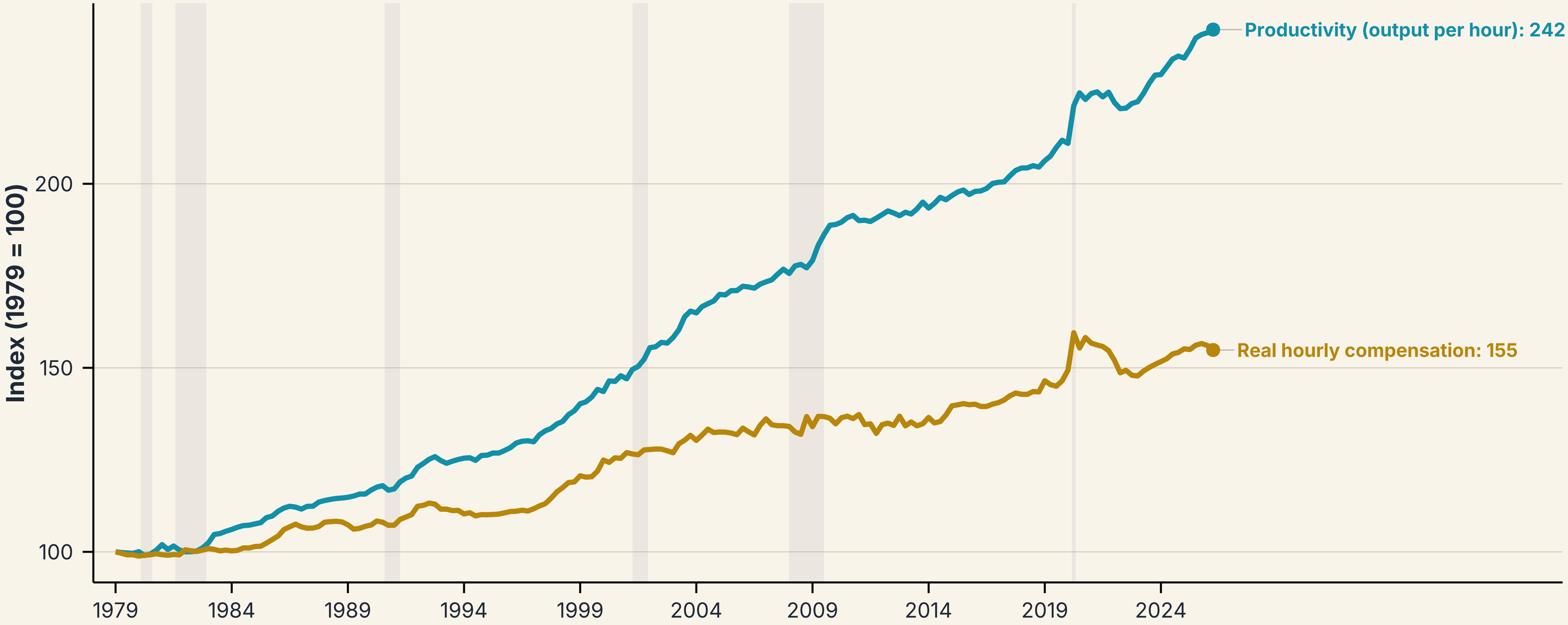
The Wedge: Productivity vs Pay Since 1979

Nonfarm business sector, indexed to 1979 = 100 · Latest: Q2 2026



Notes: Output per hour vs real hourly compensation, both for the nonfarm business sector. The two series are deflated by different price indexes: compensation by the CPI-U, output by the nonfarm business output deflator. BLS attributes a substantial part of the gap shown here to that difference rather than to pay diverging from productivity.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics via FRED (OPHNFB, COMPRNFB). Retrieved 29 Aug 2026.
Chart by Mokhtar Tabari · vizdelta.com