

Data Collection Tutorial - Applied Population Labs/GetFacts

Introduction

In order to prepare a plan for a community, those making the plan need to understand the community they are serving and what the needs of that community are. The Applied Population Lab (APL) provides a public facing toolset created and maintained by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Community and Environmental Sociology. Through their efforts, they have created a powerful and user-friendly set of tools to access information about demographics in a given community. GetFacts, APL's flagship data tool, provides an interactive visualization website for demographic data in Wisconsin. These data sets can be filtered by state, county, or municipality subdivision, and these datasets are available for download.

APL also provides tools compiling other data sources completely free to the public. Such tools include the Wisconsin Food Security Project, Net Migration Patterns for US Counties, Mapping Rural Colleges, and the Wisconsin Risk and Research Project. Local demographic profiles are also made available, such as Historical Housing Density, Poverty and Food Insecurity Profiles, and Latino Population Briefs. These profiles are filterable by Wisconsin County, and can be downloaded as individual PDF files.

The following tutorial will provide detailed instructions for GetFacts. This tool can quickly provide demographic data to compile a profile for a given geographic location in a user friendly fashion.

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1.) Navigate to the GetFacts website with the following link: [GetFacts](#)

To create a demographic profile, click on the “Data Viewer” button at the top-right of the web page (fig. 1). GetFacts Data Viewer defaults to a profile of Wisconsin as a whole.



Fig. 1

2.) To filter based on a specific location, select the “Change Location & Profile Type” button in the top right corner of the Data Viewer site (fig. 2).

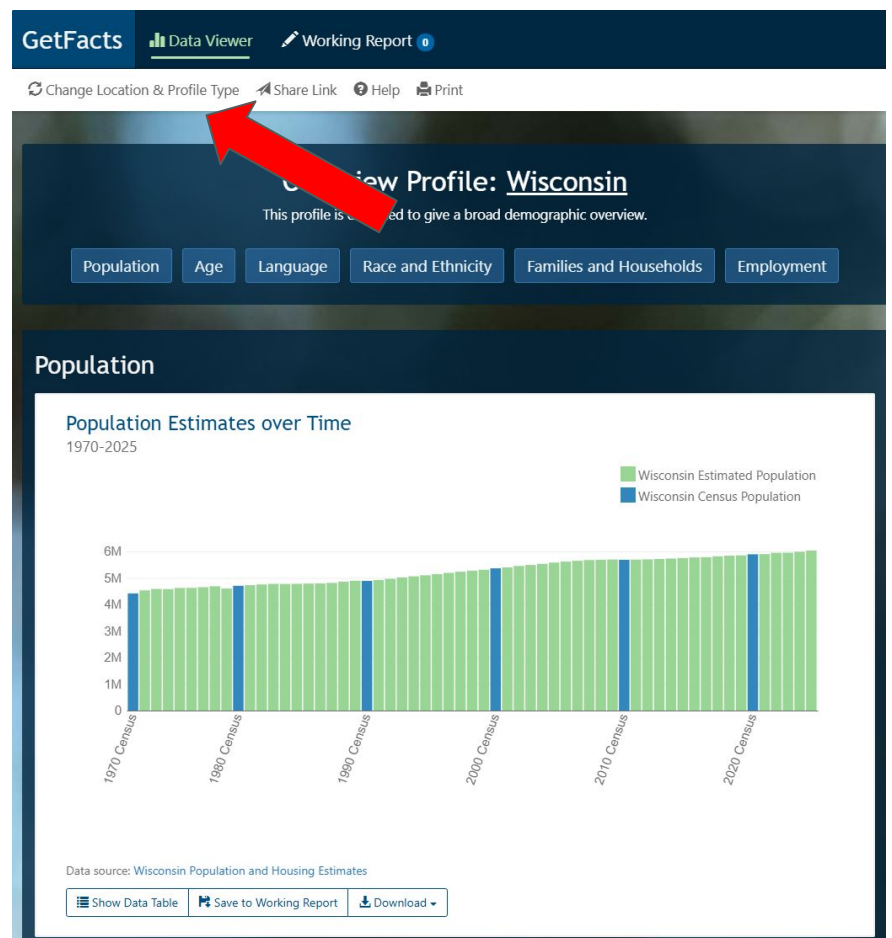


Fig. 2

3.) To filter based on a specific municipality, select the “County Subdivision” button along the top of the new window. Be sure that the “Find an Area” tab is currently selected (fig. 3). For this example, we will look at the City of Sheboygan. Once you have found your selected municipality, select “Generate New Profile for Selected Location” at the bottom center of the window.

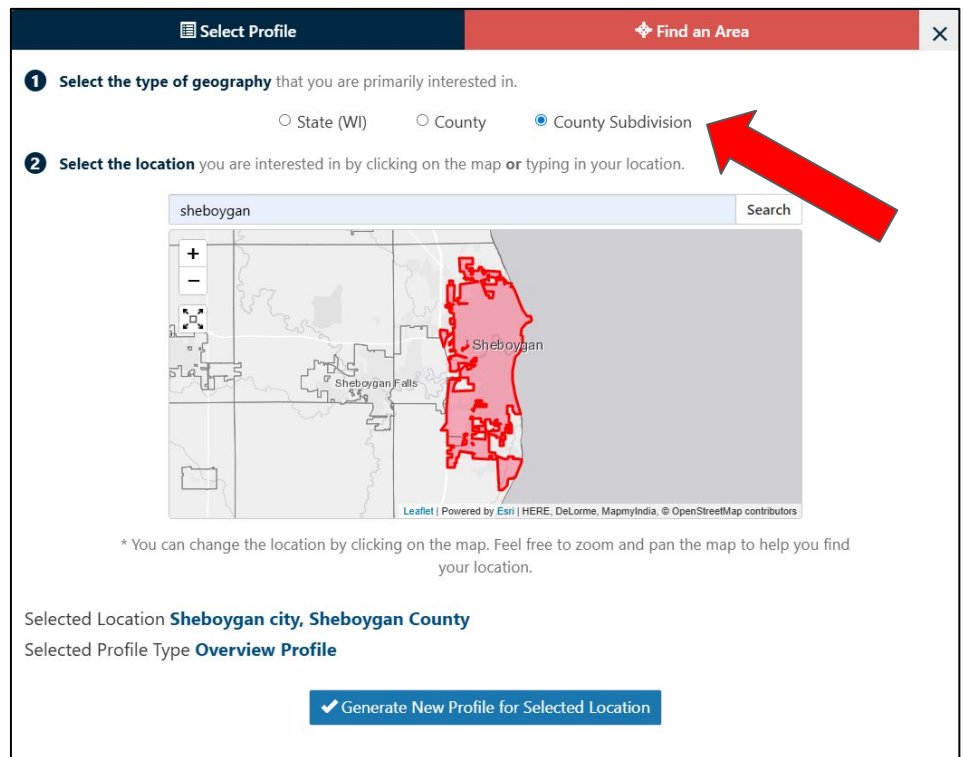


Fig. 3

4.)The Overview Profile provides a broad demographic view of the specified region. The categories for this profile are Population, Age, Language, Race and Ethnicity, Families and Households, and Employment. Each category will have charts and tables displaying datasets within said category. When applicable, these charts will compare the data for the municipality, county, and state for comparison points. Scroll down the profile page to view the data sets available for your selected municipality (fig. 4).

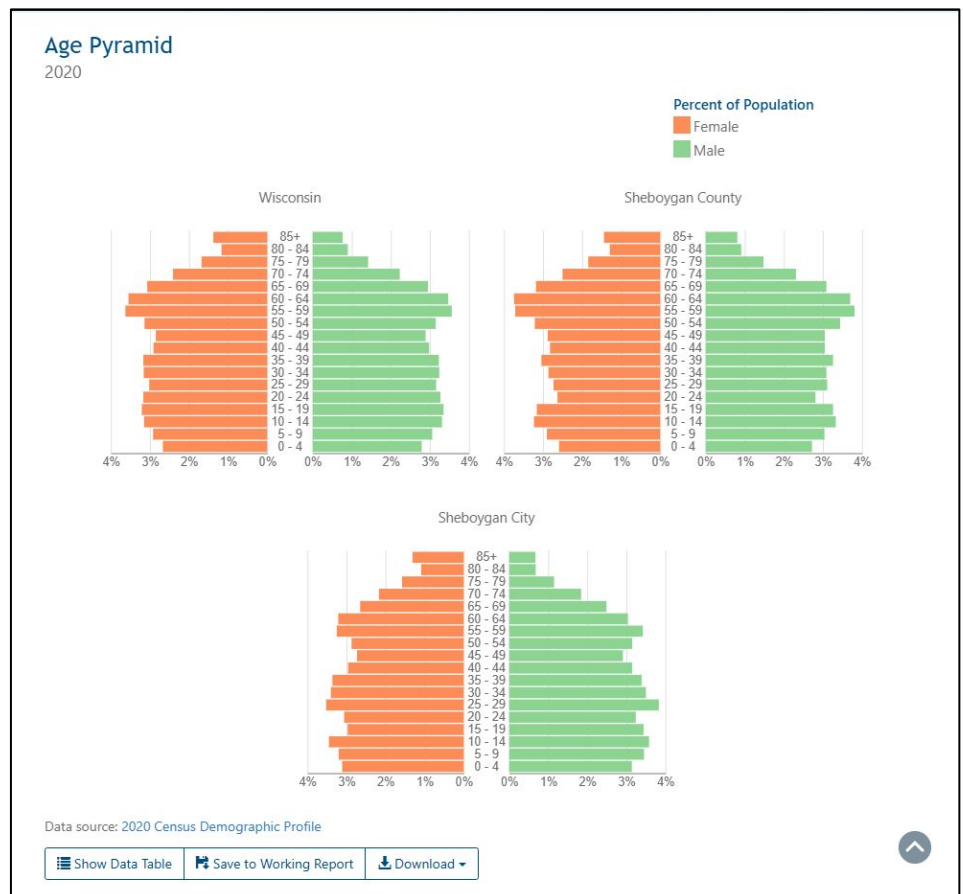


Fig. 4

5.) GetFacts allows users to download each individual dataset as either an image or as a table in “CSV” format, which can be opened by any spreadsheet software of a user’s choosing. The download button is located at the bottom center of a given data set (fig. 5). The “CSV” file can be used to create charts of the data set by the user, if a desired visual format is preferred. Otherwise, the Image selection in the Download menu can be used to download directly an image of the displayed chart.

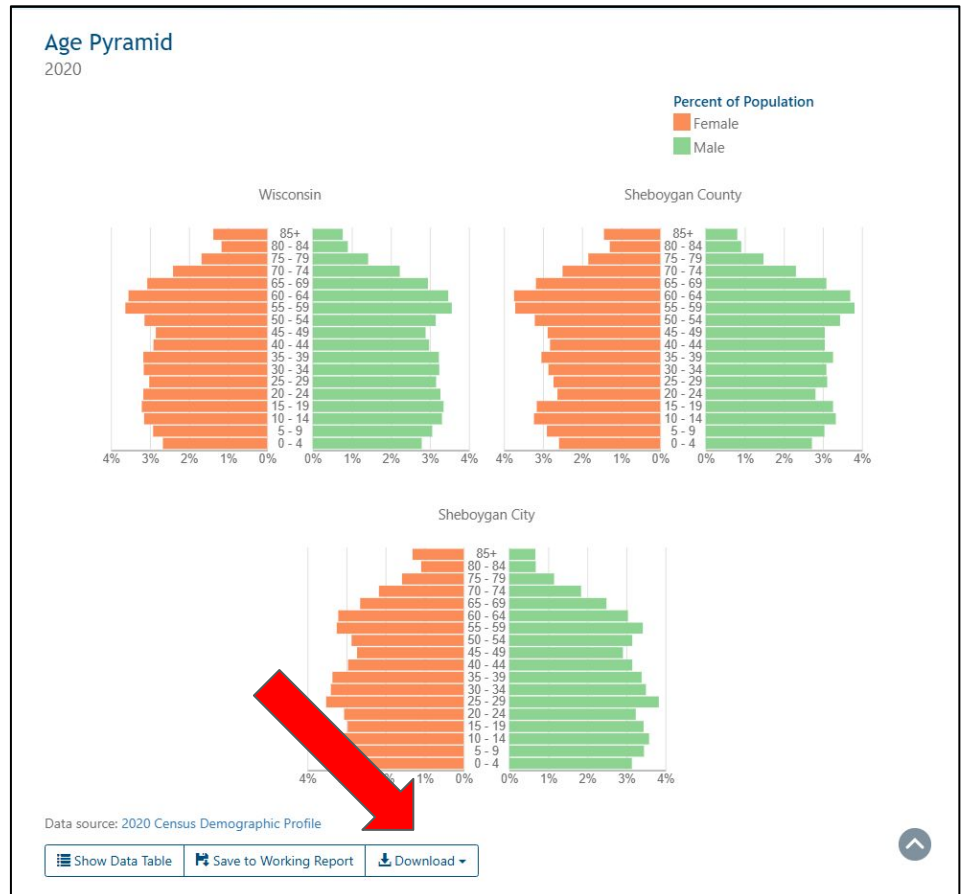


Fig. 5