

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 007

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Area: Mùideart (Moidart): Gleann Mhùideirt, Inbhir Mhùideirt, Ceann Loch Mhùideirt, Gleann Forsan, Asairidh & Siùna

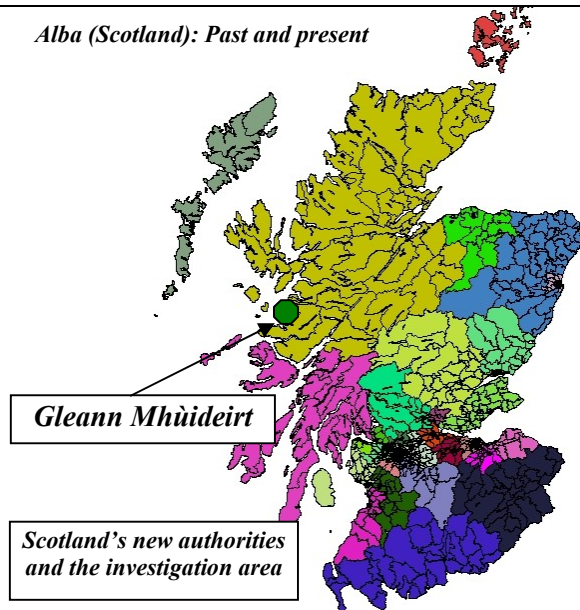
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Eilan Shona, Invermoidart (Shona), Glen Forslan, Asary, Glenmoidart, Kinlochmoidart)

Number of households: 50 Population present at census night: 230

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 89.4 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Inverness-shire	Arisaig & Moidart	Aharacle	4	1 – 6
			5	7 – 11
			6	2-4

Alba (Scotland): Past and present

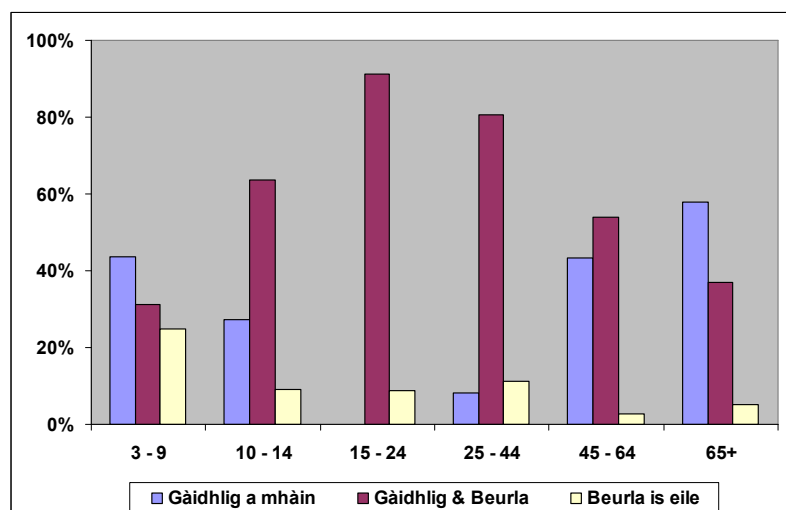


State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

The district was as staunchly Gàidhlig speaking as any in the West Highlands. Overall percentages are slightly misleading because of the presence of a substantial minority of Lowlanders. All persons born in the Highlands spoke Gàidhlig – a quarter of them spoke no English. The language was strongest in *Gleann Forsan*; English was mainly present in the households of the two estates. Except among the clergy and teaching profession Gàidhlig was almost universally spoken. Monolingual Gàidhlig speakers were mainly found in the youngest and oldest age groups.

Area description:

This fact-sheet is concerned with the communities around the secluded *Loch Mhùideirt* (Loch Moidart) and on the island of *Siùna* (Shona). These were essentially two vast Highland estates with the main bulk of population concentrated in small coastal strips of croft land. The hinterland was managed by a few shepherds and gamekeepers. At the time of the census main gateway to the wider world was the sea.



Age profile: Share of population speaking (1) Gàidhlig, (2) Gàidhlig & English, or (3) no Gàidhlig at all

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	Population enumerated				Usually resident population (3+)			
	Total	Aged 0-2	Deaf & dumb	Visitors etc. ³	Total ⁴	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Age								
Total	230	11	0	1	218	52	143	89.4 %
3-4	8	0	0	0	8	5	1	75.0 %
5-9	24	0	0	0	24	9	9	75.0 %
10-14	22	0	0	0	22	6	14	90.9 %
15-24	46	0	0	0	46	0	42	91.3 %
25-44	62	0	0	0	62	5	50	88.7 %
45-64	38	0	0	1	37	16	20	97.3 %
65+	19	0	0	0	19	11	7	94.7 %
Gender								
Female	118	6	0	1	111	31	64	85.6 %
Male	112	5	0	0	107	21	79	93.5 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	110	5	0	0	105	31	74	100 %
In neighbouring parish¹	57	2	0	0	55	16	39	100 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	31	1	0	1	29	5	24	100 %
Other places	32	3	0	0	29	0	6	20.7 %

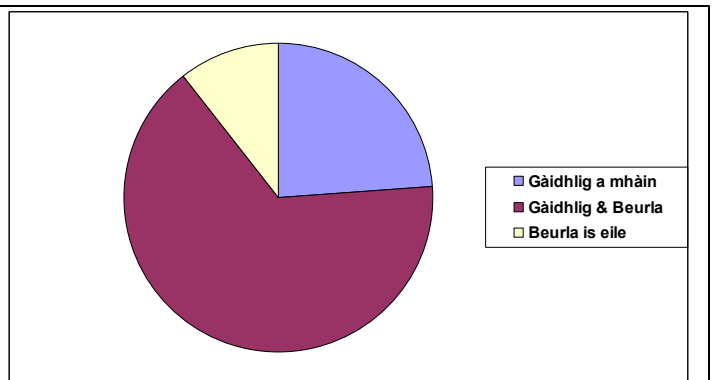
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Ardnamurchan, Ardgour (all Argyll); Glenelg, Kilmallie (all Inverness).

² Other parishes in Scotland with more than 50 % Gàidhlig speakers in the 1891 census.

³ People described as visitors, boarders, lodgers or other similar terms.

⁴ Number of enumerated persons who were (1) older than 2 years of age, who were (2) not deaf & dumb and who (3) did not live only temporarily in the area.



Share of population speaking (1) Gàidhlig, (2) Gàidhlig & English, or (3) no Gàidhlig at all

Background of Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profiles:

The 1891 census was the first such enumeration exercise with an unequivocal language question. After more than 100 years the original census forms are publicly available for detailed analysis. During research concerned with the “Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Studies” a vast number of such local statistics have been gathered about the Gàidhlig speaking population of Scotland in that year. As many of these results could not be included in the reports these concise fact-sheets are a welcome way to publish some of the “local gems”. More information is provided at http://www.linguae-celticae.de/GLP_english.htm.

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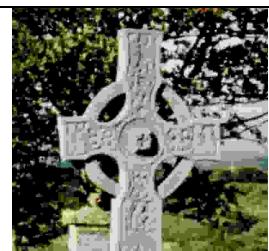
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Area: *Mùideart (Moidart): Gleann Mhùideirt, Inbhir Mhùideirt, Ceann Loch Mhùideirt, Gleann Forsan, Asairidh & Siùna*

	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Mùideart – part 2</i>	50	218	52	143	89.4 %
Individual communities					
<i>Eilean Shiùna</i> (Isle of Shuna)	18	83	18	58	91.6 %
<i>Inbhir Mhùideirt (Siùna)</i> (Invermoidart, Shuna)	2	14	5	7	85.7 %
<i>Gleann Forsan & Asairidh</i> (Glen Forslan & Asary)	2	10	4	6	100 %
<i>Gleann Mhùideirt</i> (Glen Moidart)	4	28	7	15	78.6 %
<i>Ceann Loch Mhùideirt</i> (Kinlochmoidart)	24	83	18	57	90.4 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	15	88	25	58	94.3 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	5	33	7	22	87.9 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	0	0	0	0	-
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	2	17	0	6	35.3 %
Households with no children (0-14)	28	80	20	57	96.3 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	16	93	23	61	90.3 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	2	4	1	3	100 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	3	14	0	6	42.9 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	4	15	4	11	100 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	2	8	4	4	100 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	20	76	20	51	93.4 %
Remaining occupations	3	8	0	7	87.5 %

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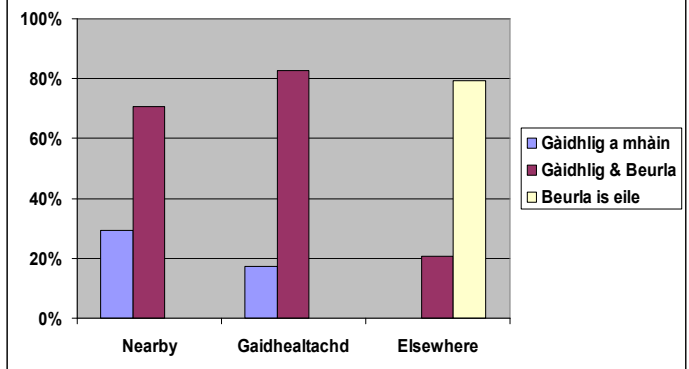
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

All people ignorant of Gàidhlig were born outside the Highlands. Monolingual Gàidhlig speakers were more likely found in the locally born population.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Arisaig & Moidart or in the adjacent parishes of Parishes of Ardnamurchan, Ardgour (all Argyll); Glenelg, Kilmallie (all Inverness).

² Born in other parishes of Scotland with more than 50 % Gàidhlig speakers in the 1891 census.



Speakers according to place of birth (1) nearby¹
(2) in remaining *Gaidhealtachd*², or (3) elsewhere

Remarks:

- 25 persons in the area were found to speak no Gàidhlig. All were born outside the *Gaidhealtachd*. Two families seemed to have moved recently to *Siùna*; their children had been born in Glasgow. Another farmer originating from England was resident in *Gleann Mhùideirt*. The remaining English-speaking households were headed by a registered physician from Moffat and an Episcopalian clergyman born in England.
- In original census report terms, the district had a population of 230 persons of all ages. 146 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and 53 were counted as monolingual Gàidhlig speakers. This led to an “official” share of Gàidhlig speakers of only 86.5 %. Accordingly, this percentage was an under-estimate of 2.9 %!