

# Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 008

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Area: **Mùideart (Moidart): Gleann Uige, Smiorasaraidh & Rois Bheinn**

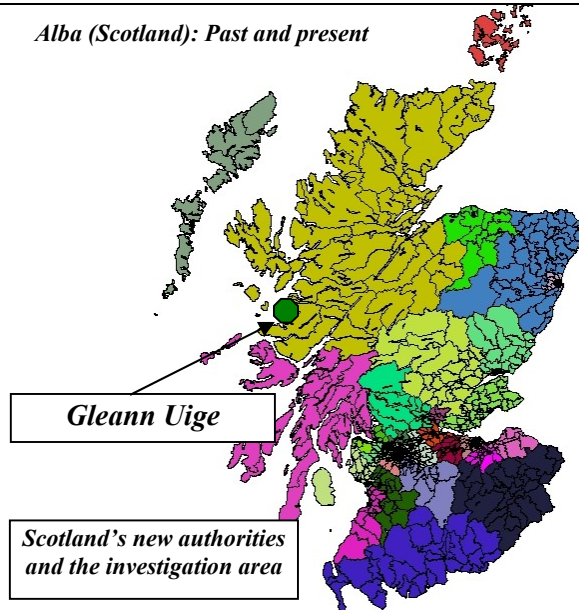
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Glenuig, Smirisary, Roshven)

Number of households: **43** Population present at census night: **218**

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking **Gàidhlig: 95.1 %**

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Inverness-shire	Arisaig & Moidart	Aharacle	6	5 – 13
		Arisaig	3	6 – 7

Alba (Scotland): Past and present

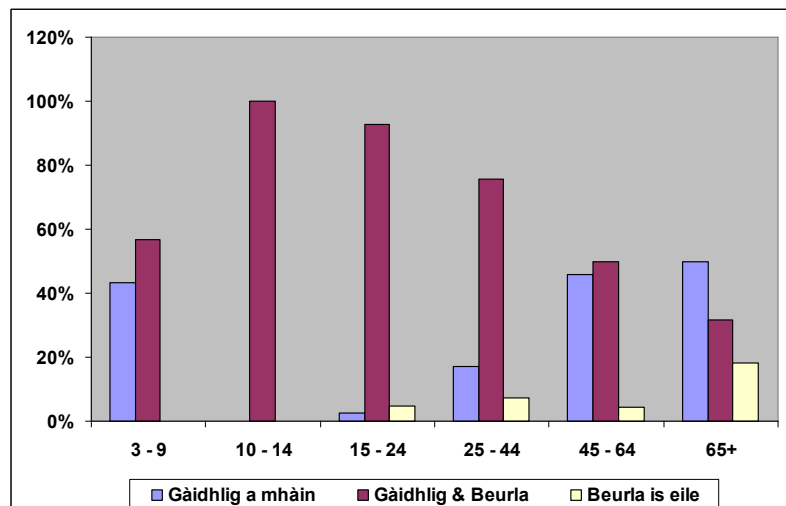


## State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

The overwhelming majority of inhabitants spoke Gàidhlig in this district. Over a quarter of all people spoke no English – especially children and people aged 45 or over. All children younger than 15 spoke Gàidhlig. The only community with monolingual English speakers was *Rois Bheinn* where the estate house was located. Besides the owning Lowland family there were a handful of servants and salmon fishers with no Gàidhlig whatsoever. Both *Gleann Uige* (Glenuig) and *Smiorasaraidh* (Smirisary) on the other hand were totally Gàidhlig speaking.

## Area description:

The communities described are situated on the southern shores of *Loch Ailleart* (Loch Ailort) as part of the district of *Mùideart* (Moidart). Apart from the residential home of the owners of Roshven Estate people lived in three crofting hamlets near the coastline.



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. <sup>3</sup>	Total <sup>4</sup>	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<b>Age</b>								
<b>Total</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>95.1 %</b>
<b>3-4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>5-9</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>10-14</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>15-24</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>97.4 %</b>
<b>25-44</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>92.7 %</b>
<b>45-64</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>95.7 %</b>
<b>65+</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>81.8 %</b>
<b>Gender</b>								
<b>Female</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>96.3 %</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>93.7 %</b>
<b>Place of birth</b>								
<b>Born in parish</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>In neighbouring parish<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>36</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>97.2 %</b>
<b>Gaidhealtachd elsewhere<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Other places</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>43.8 %</b>

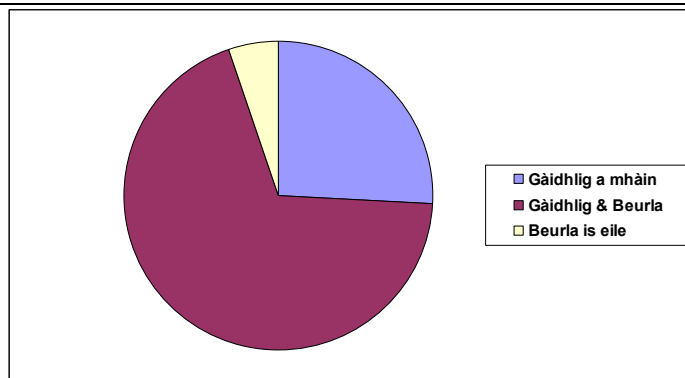
## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Parishes of Ardnamurchan, Ardgour (both Argyll); Glenelg, Kilmallie (both Inverness).

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

<sup>3</sup> People described as visitors, boarders, lodgers or other similar terms.

<sup>4</sup> 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](http://www.linguae-celticae.de/GLP_english.htm).

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	Households	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	<i>Gàidhlig</i>	<i>Gàidhlig</i> & English	<i>Gàidhlig</i> speakers (%)
<i>Mùideart – part 3</i>	43	203	53	140	95.1 %
<b>Individual communities</b>					
<i>Rois Bheinn</i> (Roshven)	12	51	5	36	80.4 %
<i>Gleann Uige</i> (Glenuig)	16	78	20	58	100 %
<i>Smiorasaraidh</i> (Smirisary)	15	74	28	46	100 %
<b>Language of parents</b>					
Both parents <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	18	110	24	86	100 %
Single parent <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	2	11	3	8	100 %
One parent <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	0	0	0	0	-
No <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking parent	0	0	0	0	-
Households with no children (0-14)	23	82	26	46	87.8 %
<b>Occupation of head of household</b>					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	23	107	23	70	98.1 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	1	4	1	4	100 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	1	2	0	0	-
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	4	17	4	13	100 %
Living on private means	2	17	0	12	70.6 %
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	1	3	4	2	66.7 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	11	54	20	39	98.1 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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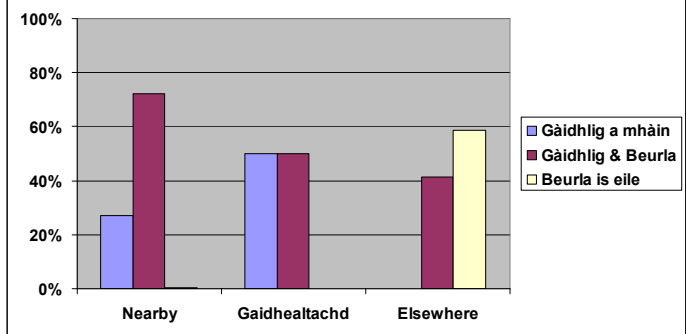
## Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

All persons with no Gàidhlig were born outside the Highlands (see also remarks below). “Gaelic only” was more pronounced among people from other parts of the *Gaidhealtachd* than from the area itself or from neighbouring parishes.

### Notes:

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

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



Speakers according to place of birth (1) nearby<sup>1</sup>  
(2) in remaining *Gaidhealtachd*<sup>2</sup>, or (3) elsewhere

## Remarks:

1. There were 10 people living in the district who did not speak *Gàidhlig*. This group consisted of the elementary teacher from Dumfries, two salmon fishers born in Morayshire, and the residential owners of Roshven House and a few of their servants. Owners of the estate were a retired professor of mathematics from Fife and his son, a barrister from Glasgow.
2. In original census report terms, the district had a population of 218 persons of all ages. 148 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and 59 were counted as monolingual *Gàidhlig* speakers. This led to an “official” share of *Gàidhlig* speakers of 95.0 %. Accordingly, this percentage was an under-estimate of just 0.1 %.