

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

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Area: *Eadra Chaolais (Eddrachillis): Ceann Loch Biorbhaidh, Innis Seigrea, Am Bad Call, Aisir Mòr, Druim na Gaoithe, Seannabhat & Guailin*

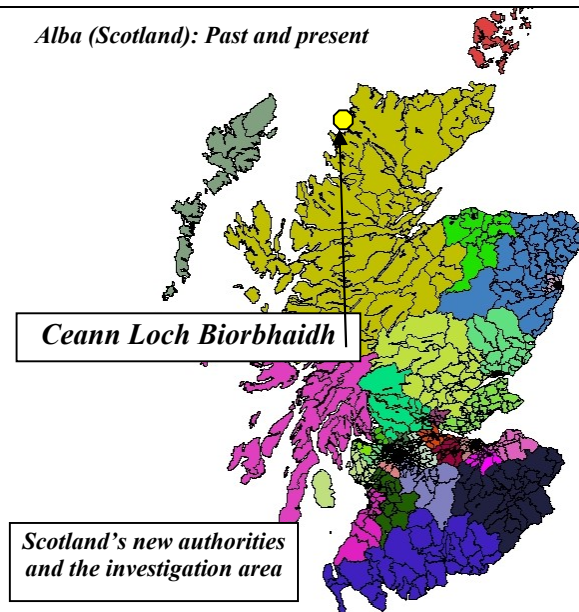
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Oldshoremore, Polin, Drumnaguie, Inshegra, Gualin, Strathan, Sandwood, Kinlochbervie, Badcall Inchar)

Number of households: 84 **Population present at census night:** 449

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 97.6 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Sutherland	Eddrachillis	Kinlochbervie	1	1 – 11
			2	1 - 12

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

The Gàidhlig language was almost universally spoken by the inhabitants.

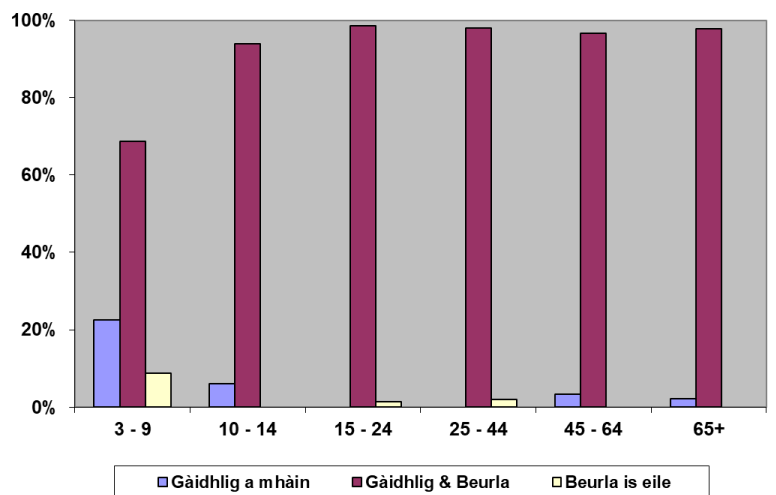
Gàidhlig monolingualism was almost confined to the pre-school aged children, but there they outnumbered English monoglots by eleven to three! A further 14 of those young ones were bilingual.

Just ten residents did not speak Gàidhlig (they are described in the remarks on page 4 of this factsheet).

Area description:

The area is a very thinly populated part of Sutherland's west coast: the parish of *Eadra Chaolais* (Eddrachillis), which literally means 'between the sealochs'. The vast "empty" hinterland had been left to shepherds and gamekeepers after the so-called "Highland Clearances".

The only valuable resource for locals was gained from the sea. Around the sheltered bays of this rocky coast a fishing village like *Ceann Loch Biorbhaidh* (Kinlochbervie) or even smaller crofter settlements provided some means to earn a living.



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	449	33	0	6	410	24	376	97.6 %
3-4	28	0	0	0	28	11	14	89.3 %
5-9	53	0	0	1	52	7	41	92.3 %
10-14	51	0	0	1	50	3	47	100.0 %
15-24	71	0	0	0	71	0	70	98.6 %
25-44	104	0	0	1	103	0	101	98.1 %
45-64	62	0	0	2	60	2	58	100.0 %
65+	47	0	0	1	46	1	45	100.0 %
Gender								
Female	227	14	0	4	209	10	194	97.6 %
Male	222	19	0	2	201	14	182	97.5 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	404	32	0	4	368	20	346	99.5 %
In neighbouring parish¹	10	0	0	0	10	3	3	60.0 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	30	0	0	1	29	1	27	96.6 %
Other places	5	1	0	1	3	0	0	0.0 %

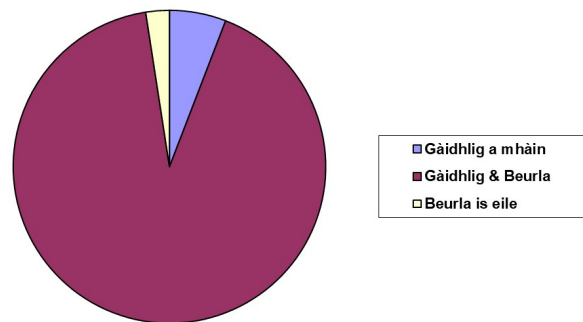
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Durness, Assynt, or Lairg (all in Sutherland).

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 factsheets 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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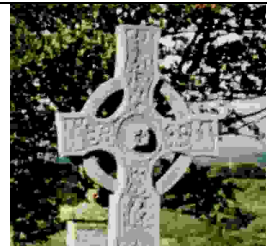
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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Ceann Loch Biorbhaidh & Aisir Mòr</i>	84	410	24	376	97.6 %
Individual communities					
<i>Aisir Mòr</i> (Oldshoremore)	26	125	3	116	95.2 %
<i>Druim na Gaoithe</i> (Drumnaguie)	19	81	8	73	100.0 %
<i>Innis Seigrea</i> (Inshegra)	12	75	3	71	98.7 %
<i>Seannabhat & Guailin</i> (Sandwood & Gualin)	3	17	4	13	100.0 %
<i>Ceann Loch Biorbhaidh</i> (Kinlochbervie)	24	112	6	103	97.3 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	30	164	10	154	100.0 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	19	112	13	97	98.2 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	1	7	0	2	28.6 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	0	0	0	0	-
Households with no children (0-14)	34	127	1	123	97.6 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	65	331	17	311	99.1 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	4	21	4	17	100.0 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	3	13	0	7	53.8 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	4	15	0	15	100.0 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	2	12	0	12	100.0 %
Remaining occupations	6	18	3	14	94.4 %

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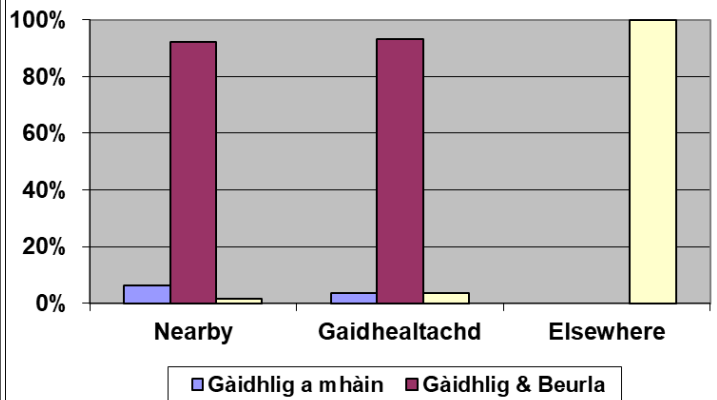
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The language was spoken universally except by a very tiny number of residents (see remarks below).

Notes:

¹ Born either in Eddrachillis or in the adjacent parishes of Durness, Assynt, or Lairg (all in Sutherland).

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:

1. Official census figures reported 381 bilingual inhabitants and 36 monolingual Gàidhlig-speakers out of a total population of 449 persons (92.9%). The usually resident population of 410 persons, however, consisted of 400 Gàidhlig-speakers (97.6%) including 24 inhabitants “with no English”.
2. The vast majority of the 24 monolingual Gàidhlig-speakers (21 inhabitants) were younger than 10 years-of-age. The remaining three persons were older people.
3. Just ten inhabitants were recorded as “having no Gaelic”. They can be described as follows:
 - Five such census entrants were part of the schoolmasters’ family in *Aisir Mòr* (Oldshoremore). He himself was bilingual and born in Tunga (Tongue) on the north coast. However, his wife came from Glenrinnis in Banffshire. Subsequently their four children also did not speak Gàidhlig.
 - A 9-year-old granddaughter of a crofter in *Aisir Mòr* did not speak Gàidhlig, too. She was born in Glasgow, and no-one knows at which age she came to her grandfathers’ home.
 - A 44-year-old farmer in *Ceann Loch Biorbhaidh* was also monolingual English-speaker. He came originally from Edinburgh.
 - The remaining three “English-only” entrants were children below school age.