

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 159

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Area: *Cinn Tìre (Kintyre): Sgibinis, Claonaig & Crosaig*

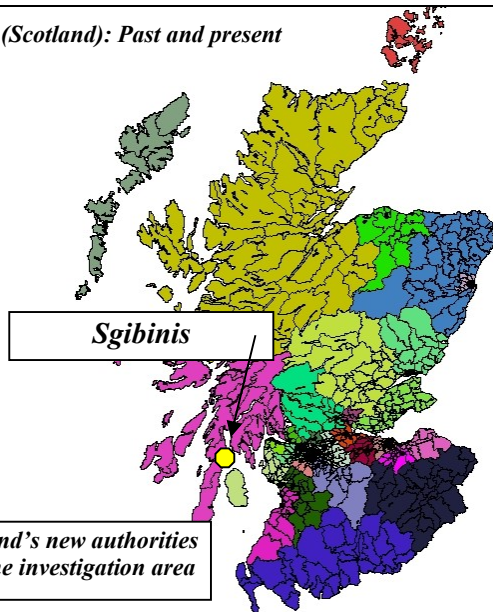
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Skipness, Altgalvas, Corckandine, Monachach, Garvoch, Skipness, Glensgatal, Coalfine, Auchameanach, Gortaneorn, Clonaig, Craigag, Escart, Crossaig, Cour, Garchard)

Number of households: **88** Population present at census night: **390**

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: **80.7 %**

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Argyll	Saddell & Skipness	Skipness	1	1 – 9
			2	1 – 6
			3	1 - 7

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

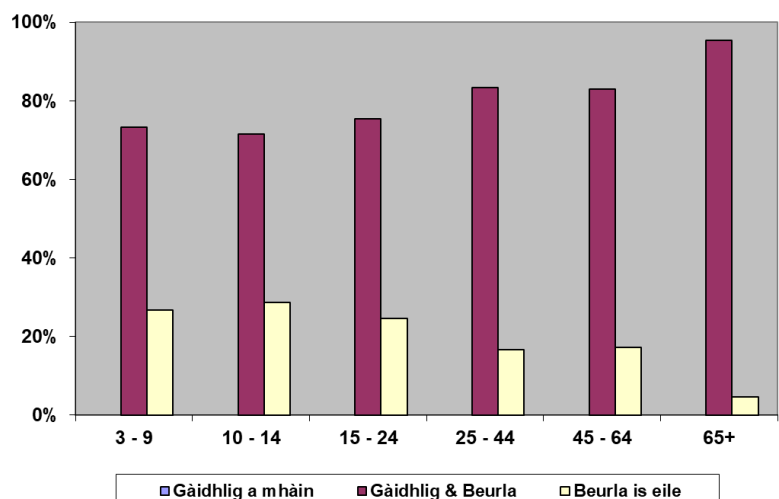
In this area the transition of Gàidhlig to English was already starting among the younger population. The strongest foothold of the local tongue was experienced in crofting settlements such as *Claonaig*. Not unsurprising English was more regularly used in the vicinity of landlord mansions and gamekeeper dwellings.

There were no “Gàidhlig only” returns experienced in the 1891 census in this part of the country.

Area description:

The investigation area forms the northeastern part of the *Cinn Tìre* (Kintyre) peninsula, just opposite the island of *Arainn* (Arran) in the *Linne Chluaidh* (Firth of Clyde).

Traditionally there existed only small fishing settlements and a few scattered crofting communities on this narrow coastal strip. Further inland just a handful of shepherd huts were found after the infamous “Highland Clearances”.



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	393	23	0	7	363	0	293	80.7 %
3-4	14	0	0	0	14	0	8	57.1 %
5-9	31	0	0	0	31	0	25	80.6 %
10-14	42	0	0	0	42	0	30	71.4 %
15-24	62	0	0	1	61	0	46	75.4 %
25-44	100	0	0	4	96	0	80	83.3%
45-64	78	0	0	2	76	0	63	82.9 %
65+	43	0	0	0	43	0	41	95.3 %
Gender								
Female	180	10	0	2	168	0	136	81.0 %
Male	213	13	0	5	195	0	157	80.5 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	231	19	0	0	212	0	186	87.7 %
In neighbouring parish¹	40	0	0	4	36	0	30	83.3 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	82	3	0	2	77	0	74	96.1 %
Other places	40	1	0	1	38	0	3	7.09 %

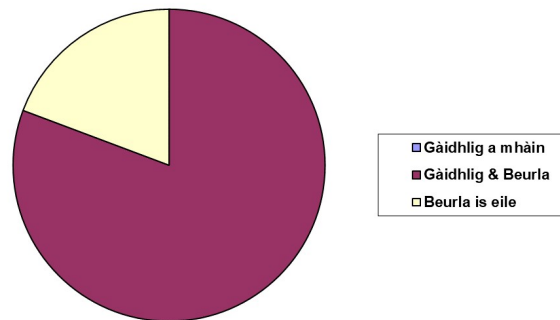
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Killean & Kilchenzie, Campbeltown, Kilcalmonell (all Argyll).

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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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Sgibinis, Claonaig & Crosaig</i>	88	363	0	293	80.7 %
Individual communities					
<i>Sgibinis</i> (Skipness)	40	154	0	116	75.3 %
<i>Claonaig</i> (Claonaig)	23	94	0	90	95.7 %
<i>Crosaig</i> (Crosaig)	25	115	0	87	75.7 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	24	129	0	120	93.0 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	11	50	0	40	80.0 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	3	13	0	6	46.2 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	4	24	0	0	0.0 %
Households with no children (0-14)	46	147	0	127	86.4 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	36	161	0	144	89.4 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	11	62	0	48	77.4 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	2	5	0	3	60.0 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	13	55	0	40	72.7 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	4	18	0	7	38.9 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	15	39	0	33	84.6 %
Remaining occupations	7	23	0	18	78.3 %

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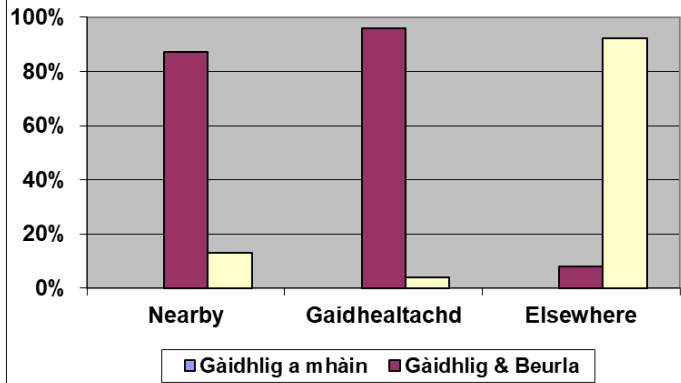
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The language was widely used by people born nearby or in the wider Gaidhealtachd. Those born further afield were very unlikely to speak Gàidhlig.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Saddell & Skipness or in the adjacent parishes of Killean & Kilchenzie, Campbeltown or Kilcalmonell (all Argyll).

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 298 bilingual inhabitants and no monolingual Gàidhlig-speakers out of a total population of 395 persons (75.4%). The usually resident population of 363 persons, however, consisted of 293 Gàidhlig-speakers (80.7%) including no inhabitants “with no English”.