

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 178

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Area: *Innse Gall (Hebrides): Hiort*

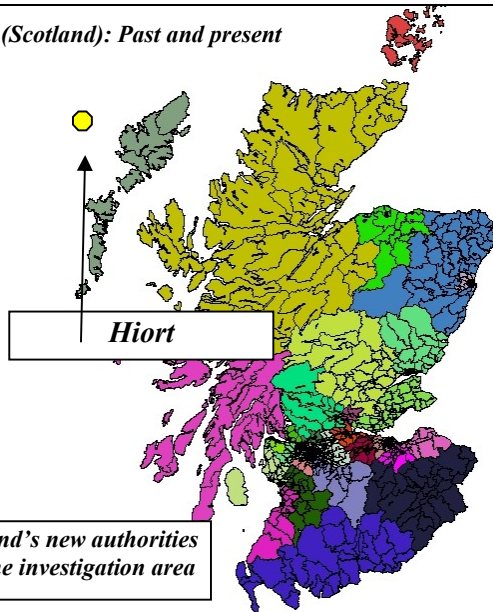
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: St. Kilda)

Number of households: **18** Population present at census night: **71**

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking *Gàidhlig*: **100.0 %**

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Inverness-shire	Harris	St. Kilda	1	1 - 4

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of *Gàidhlig* in 1891:

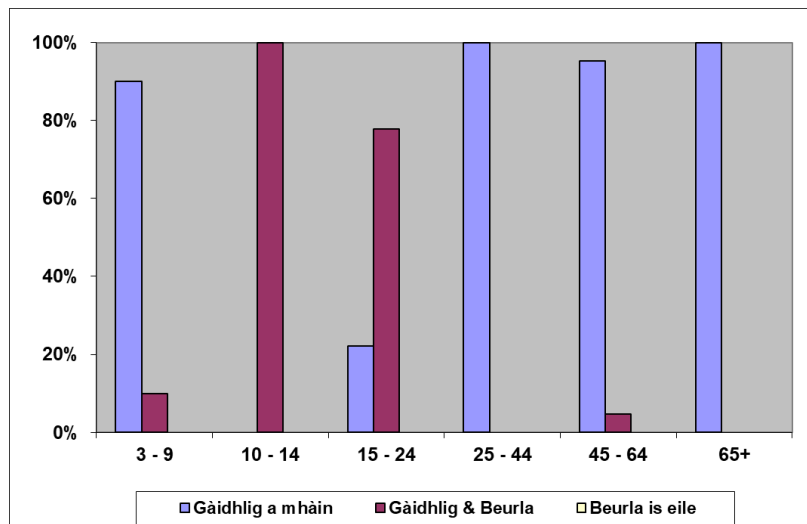
On this rather isolated island *Gàidhlig* was universally spoken and almost exclusively so. Just schoolchildren knew English and, of course, the local minister of the Free Church.

No monolingual speaker of English was present on census day in 1891.

Area description:

The island archipelago of St. Kilda lies 40 miles northwest of *Uibhist a Tuath* (North Uist) in the open Atlantic Sea.

The only inhabited and by far largest island *Hiort* (Hirta) was home to a self-supporting folk. Major occupations were sheep grazing and (in summer) hunting seafool on cliffs on *Hiort* and nearby islands and stacks.



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	71	3	0	1	67	53	14	100.0 %
3-4	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	100.0 %
5-9	9	0	0	0	9	8	1	100.0 %
10-14	5	0	0	0	5	0	5	100.0 %
15-24	9	0	0	0	9	2	7	100.0 %
25-44	13	0	0	1	12	12	0	100.0 %
45-64	21	0	0	0	21	20	1	100.0 %
65+	10	0	0	0	10	10	0	100.0 %
Gender								
Female	39	3	0	1	35	30	5	100.0 %
Male	32	0	0	0	32	23	9	100.0 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	65	3	0	0	62	51	11	100.0 %
In neighbouring parish¹	3	0	0	0	3	1	2	100.0 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	3	0	0	1	2	1	1	100.0 %
Other places	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100.0 %

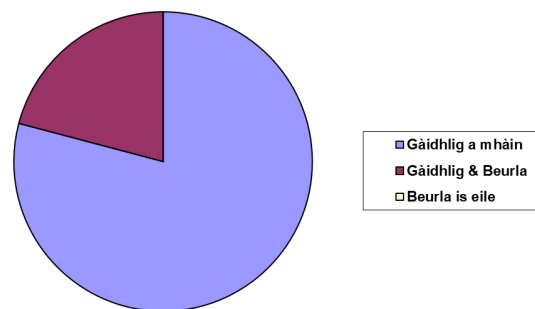
Notes:

¹ Parish of Harris.

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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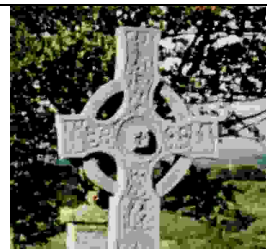
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Area: *Innse Gall (Hebrides): Hiort*

	Households	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	<i>Gàidhlig</i>	<i>Gàidhlig</i> & English	<i>Gàidhlig</i> speakers (%)
<i>Innse Gall: Hiort</i>	18	67	53	14	100.0 %
Individual communities					
<i>Hiort</i> (St. Kilda)	18	67	53	14	100.0 %
Language of parents					
Both parents <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	9	45	33	12	100.0 %
Single parent <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	0	0	0	0	-
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)	9	22	20	2	100.0 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	17	65	52	13	100.0 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	0	0	0	0	-
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	1	2	1	1	100.0 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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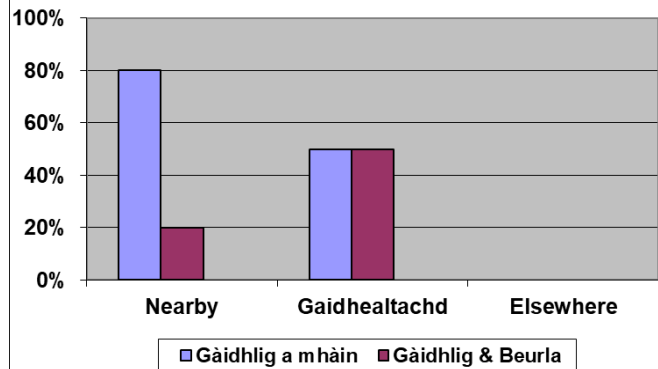
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The language was universally spoken by all inhabitants. Those people born outside the island were mostly able to speak English, too.

Notes:

¹ Born in St. Kilda.

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 15 bilingual inhabitants and 56 monolingual Gàidhlig-speakers out of a total population of 71 persons (100.0 %). The usually resident population, however, consisted of 67 Gàidhlig-speakers (100.0 %) including 53 inhabitants “with no English”.
2. The bilingual population – with just one exception – was aged between 5 and 24 and had very probably learned English at school.
3. The exception was the local minister of the Free Church, who was born in *An Tairbeart* (Tarbat) in *Ros an Ear* (Easter Ross). His servant, however, did speak only Gàidhlig. She came from *Carlabhagh* (Carloway) on the island of *Leòdhas* (Lewis).