

Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Studies¹

Vol. 03: *Uibhist a Deas & Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (South Uist & Benbecula)

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Extended² 2nd Edition

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Executive Summary

This publication is part of a series dealing with local communities which were predominantly Gaelic speaking at the end of the 19th century. Based mainly (but not exclusively) on local population census information the reports strive to examine the state of the language through the ages from 1881 until today. The most relevant information is gathered comprehensively for the smallest geographical unit possible and provided area by area – a very useful reference for people with interest in their own community. Furthermore, the impact of recent developments in education (namely teaching in Gaelic medium and Gaelic as a second language) is analysed for primary school catchments.

The islands of the Outer Hebrides in general have long been regarded as the last remaining strongholds of Gaelic in Scotland. During the past decades, however, even there the language has lost ground. This is also true for the communities of South Uist, Benbecula and Eriskay in the south of the island chain. But the investigations presented here conclude that South Uist ranks currently among the few locations where intergenerational language transmission works to a considerable degree. This is nevertheless only slowing down decline, but it is still not enough to counter the recent trend. On the other hand, the apparent increase of Gaelic-speaking incidence on Benbecula since 1991 is caused mainly by the closure of military installations and the leaving of army personnel and their families. This one-off effect should not gloss over the less strong language transmission on this island. Nonetheless signs of revitalisation of Gaelic in these islands are very much apparent.

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² Tables were extended with more census results of enumeration districts provided for 1881, 1891, 1901 and 1911.



Foreword to the First Edition

Since 1881 every decennial population census in Scotland included a question about the “Gaelic-speaking” population. Despite some difficulty in interpreting this data (what really means to tick a box being able to speak Gaelic) this long-term data set holds a wealth of sociological and historical information. The series highlights the circumstances in which people speaking this Celtic language have lived and still live today. In most cases this data has been used only either for very problem-specific socio-linguistic studies or they were the basis of regional or Scotland wide analysis. However, it proved very difficult for people who were interested in their own local area to have a comprehensive overview of the number and distribution of Gaelic-speaking people right on their doorstep. This series is planned to cover all regions of Scotland where Scottish Gaelic (*A' Ghàidhlig* to be correct in its own words) was still spoken by a substantial part of the population at the start of the 20th century. Accordingly, besides the main “Highland counties” of Sutherland, Ross & Cromarty, Inverness and Argyll the fringe areas of Bute (including the Isle of Arran), western Caithness, Nairn, North Dunbartonshire and more particularly Highland Perthshire will be covered. It is hoped that these small reports will be of interest not only to science people but also to those who have to cope with opinions like “Gaelic was never spoken here” in their own local community.

Foreword to the Second Edition

Almost two years have passed since the publication of the first volume of this series. In the meantime, a lot of “new” material has surfaced which merits to be publicised to a wider audience. In addition, two years are sometimes a very long time when looking at the actual state of a dynamic process: the re-animation of Scottish Gaelic in a number of places. Therefore, a second edition of the series is now being elaborated. Hopefully it will prove to be as popular as its predecessor.

Foreword to the Extended Second Edition

I am very glad to present an extended and actualized edition of the *Gàidhlig* Local Studies after more than two decades since the first publication. Of course, new data and information had been waiting to be incorporated in this compendium of language development in Scotland. Maybe rather unexpectedly, many additional figures from the past became available – especially from the 1881, 1911 and 1981 censuses. As always, I wish happy reading – a few surprises wait to be discovered!!!!

Important note: Although this text is written in the modern lingua franca for the purpose of maximum readership the object has to take its rightful place. Therefore, *Gàidhlig* placenames or expressions are preferred and the so-called English version is mentioned in brackets where appropriate. For those unfamiliar with the language: Every Gaelic expression is written in *italics* and the other place names are mainly examples of anglicisation efforts of early cartographers.



Acknowledgements

The author is indebted to many organisations which have been very kind in providing information about the subject. I am very grateful for this active encouragement. Very special thanks go of course to the General Register Office for Scotland for the opportunity to use the census material in this study. The team at the Demographic Dissemination Branch has been very supportive. Crown Copyright on the census data is acknowledged gratefully. Very worthwhile was also the relentless assistance of Mrs. Melissa Barlow of the University of Texas and Mrs. Liz Mackie of the University of Aberdeen who both proved to be very successful in unearthing rare material of more than a century ago. And last but not least thank is also due to the many individuals with whom I spent endless hours of discussion witnessing true Highland hospitality. *Tapadh leibh a h-uile duine!*

Wedel, *An Dàmhar* 2003
Hamburg, *An t-Sultain* 2005
Hamburg, *Am Màirt* 2024

Kurt C. Duwe

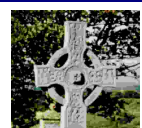


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1 Introduction

This report is concerned with the status of *Gàidhlig*-speaking in a substantial part of the southern Outer Hebrides (see fig. 1). The civil parish of *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) is situated between the islands of *Barraigh* (Barra) and *Uibhist a Tuath* (North Uist). It incorporates incidentally a larger area than the island itself - included are also the inhabited islands of *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (Benbecula) and *Eiriosgaigh* (Eriskay). This is mainly peaty and *loch*an-covered land with sandy beaches and *machair* dunes on the Atlantic side contrasting sharply with the rocky coastline to the east with its secluded inlets. The island chain is a few kilometres wide with a moderate hill range around *Beinn Mhòr* in the north-east of the main island.

Uibhist a Deas has been for centuries overwhelmingly *Gàidhlig*-speaking. The community preserved many of the oral traditions of the language until living memory. In the 1930s Mary Fay Shaw (later wife of John Lorne Campbell) spent several years here to add to her since famous collection of *Gàidhlig* songs. Later the first sound recordings were taken by John Lorne Campbell to collect songs, poetry and tales which otherwise would have been lost forever. Here and on a few neighbouring islands like *Barraigh* a few enthusiasts recorded relentlessly until World War II. Even today *Gàidhlig* is still the community language of most of the population although the language has experienced a general decline since 1981. The language is also used prominently in cultural festivities, and it is notable that *Fèis Tìr a Mhurain* is the only *Fèis* in Scotland where *Gàidhlig* is the only language of tuition.

Until 1975 this part of the country belonged to the county of Inverness-shire which was administered from far away *Inbhir Nis* (Inverness). Since then, *Uibhist a Deas* is part of the local authority area of *Comhairle nan Eilean* which is responsible for the whole island chain from *Leòdhas* (Lewis) to *Barraigh*. The settlement of *Bail'a'Mhanaich* (Balivanich) on *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* serves as an administrative centre of the southern Outer Hebrides providing many important facilities for the community. This includes educational provisions located in the premises of the secondary school of *Lionacleit* on the same island.

Most of the approximately 3,400 inhabitants live in small settlements scattered over the whole western part of the islands. The only larger townships are *Bail'a'Mhanaich* and the ferry port of *Loch Baghasdail* (Lochboisdale) in the south-east of *Uibhist a Deas*. Most of the islanders belong to the Catholic Church like those of the more southern neighbour *Barraigh*. Main occupations are of course crofting, tourism, inshore fishing, and public employment. Within the last few years, a certain diversification succeeded with the establishment of some light industry, fish farming and other service industries. During the period of 1960 until the end of the 20th century there was a major military settlement on *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* concerned with the operation of a rocket range on *Uibhist a Deas* and an airfield at *Bail'a'Mhanaich* (Balivanich). This had a positive impact on the local economy and was one reason for the moderate halt in depopulation during the presence of the armed forces. Statistically this diluted consistently census figures on *Gàidhlig*-speaking for the area but in the real world both language communities lived quite separate lives and *Gàidhlig* remained pre-dominant within the local population.

The following short chapters look into the historical development of the use of *Gàidhlig* on the islands from the end of the 19th century until today – mainly highlighted by references to and analysis of population census results in local detail. Information on additionally available studies of language use and especially educational provision to study *Gàidhlig* (or even being educated through the medium of the language) is used where considered as useful.



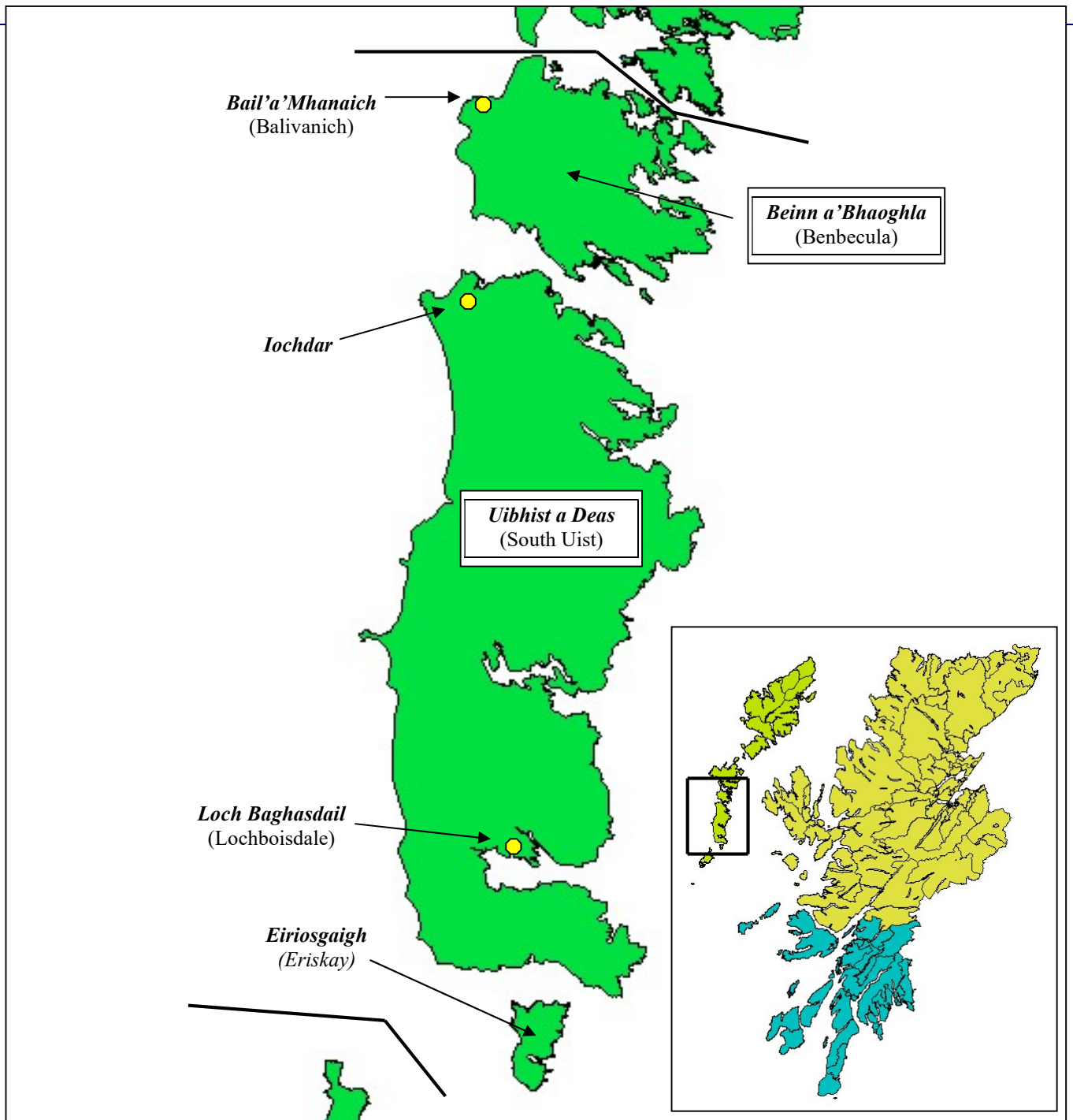
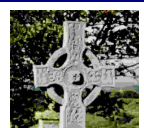


Fig. 1: Overview map of the study area³

³ Digital boundaries courtesy of Ordnance Survey as part of the Geography Products by GROS for the 2001 census.



2 The Historical Background

The islands of *Na h-Eileanan an Iar* (the Western Isles) may still boast the strongest Gàidhlig-speaking communities in the country. This is of course true also for *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) and its northerly neighbour *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (Benbecula). The presence of a military base at *Bail'a'Mhanaich* (Bali-vanich) between the late 1950s and the late 1990s did obscure this fact somewhat in the respective census results because a large number of military personnel swallowed the “English only” enumerations considerably. 2001 then was the first census for decades in which overall census figures on Gàidhlig-speakers were representative of the local population. In fig. 2 the share of the Gàidhlig-speaking population is shown for the two parishes of *Uibhist a Deas* (comprising also the islands of *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* and *Eiriosgaigh*) and *Barraigh* (Barra). Here it is clearly depicted that both areas were subject to the same sociological and economic pressures – the percentages are almost identical in 1951 and 2001. The difference in the years in between was due to the presence of military personnel and their families.

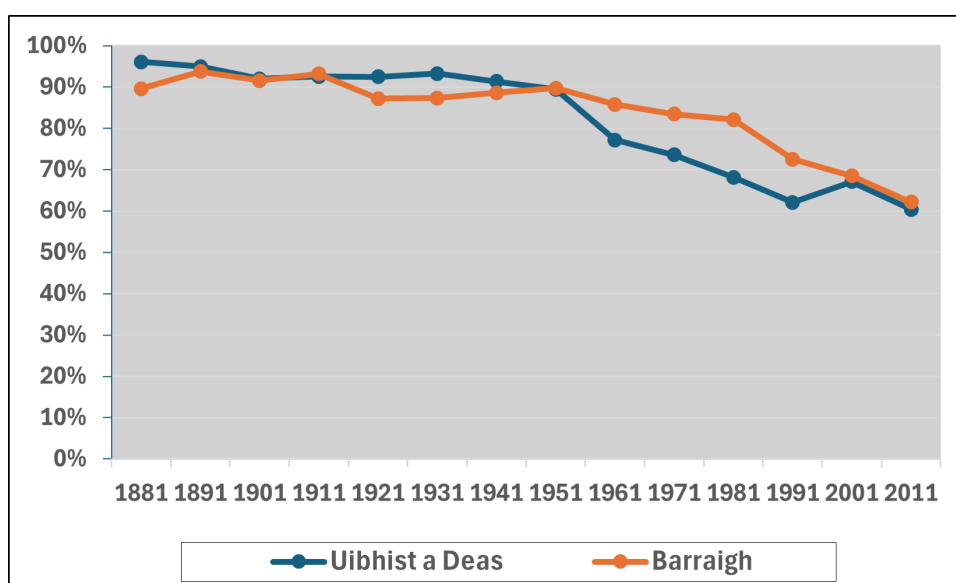


Fig. 2: Gàidhlig-speakers (aged 3 and over) as percentage of total population between 1881 and 2011 – civil parishes of *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) and neighbouring *Barraigh* (Barra)⁴

Practically all inhabitants of the islands had been Gàidhlig-speakers since the retreat of Scandinavian influence on the western islands of Scotland. The New Statistical Account of Scotland (1831-45) reported quite frankly: “*The language used by the inhabitants is Gaelic, which is spoken with considerable purity, and has not lost ground within the last forty years.*” Things were not to change significantly for the next four decades either.

2.1 From Victorian times until the Second World War (Census 1881-1931)

The first population census with information about the spoken vernacular in 1881 underlined the dominant state of the traditional tongue impressively (table 2). The next census of 1891 saw over 60 % of inhabitants as not speaking English at all (fig. 3 and table 10). A look at the original census forms of 1891⁵ reveals that even these high figures were underestimating the real strength of Gàidhlig. Taking the enumeration district of *Loch Baghasdail a Tuath* (North Lochboisdale) as an example the underestimation is striking. Whereas the official census returns reported 270 persons speaking Gàidhlig (86.8 % of the total population) the figures of the usually resident population (aged three years or over) reveal a staggering 93.9 % (Duwe, 2005). Just 19 residents had no “G” (Gaelic only) or “G&E” (Gaelic and Eng-

⁴ There was no census taken in 1941 because of World War II – values are therefore interpolated between 1931 and 1951.

⁵ After a period of 100 years information provided on the original census forms is publicly available. At the time of writing this is already the case for census returns of 1881, 1891 and 1901.



lish speaking) marks on their registration sheets. These persons belonged mainly to the families of the police sergeant, the bank agent, the harbour master, and the local hotel keeper. They originated all from English speaking places in Ross-shire (Avoch), Fife, and Aberdeenshire. In essence: The locals were thoroughly (in most cases exclusively) *Gàidhlig*-speakers.

Census information generally is very detailed for the years 1881, 1891, 1901 and 1911. Table 1 below provides an overview of the individual strength of the language in different parts of the island (see also tables 10, 11, 20 and 21 in the annex). Keeping in mind that visitors and children aged less than 3 years were all included in the total population base the realistic percentages should read almost 100 % in all places. Even in 1901 *Gàidhlig* monoglot speakers were rather the norm than the exception in most communities.

Number of persons and percentage of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers in districts of <i>Uibhist a Deas & Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> – 1881 - 1911							
Area ⁶	All persons speaking <i>Gàidhlig</i> ⁷				Monolingual share of all <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers ⁸		
	1881	1891	1901	1911	1891	1901	1911
<i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> (Benbecula)	1,589 95.7 %	1,475 96.2 %	1,313 92.7 %	1,224 93.8 %	912 61.8 %	575 43.8 %	462 37.7 %
<i>Fladaigh & Griomasaigh</i> ⁹ (Fladda & Grimsay)	126 93.3 %	122 97.6 %	74 92.5 %	76 96.2 %	74 60.7 %	44 59.5 %	32 31.3 %
<i>Tobha Mòr</i> (Howmore)	1,869 95.0 %	1,784 94.9 %	1,595 92.4 %	1,562 95.5 %	1,152 64.6 %	789 49.5 %	540 34.6 %
<i>Baghasdail</i> (Boisdale)	1,804 97.1 %	1,729 94.5 %	1,651 91.0 %	1,744 91.5 %	1,098 63.5 %	856 51.8 %	498 28.6 %
<i>Eiriosgaidh</i> (Eriskay)	464 99.6 %	424 93.4 %	440 92.1 %	423 93.4 %	194 45.8 %	236 53.6 %	123 29.1 %

Table 1: Number of persons speaking *Gàidhlig* and all *Gàidhlig*-speakers as share of population in *Uibhist a Deas* and nearby islands according to local census data from 1881 to 1911

Education policy after the 1872 Education Act, however, would change things during the forthcoming decades (table 11). But this would have only an effect on the bilingual population, people who did not speak *Gàidhlig* remained a tiny minority at each census until 1931. Within the pre-school group of children between 3 and 4 years of age *Gàidhlig*-only remained the norm rather the exception – English therefore was only used in school, in official proceedings and with the occasional visitor. In those years the general population decline through emigration remained unabated on the islands because of the harsh economic conditions. This caused the apparent decline in numbers of *Gàidhlig*-speakers although it had virtually no effect on the dominance of the language in the community.

⁶ Enumeration division or island.

⁷ Percentages of *Gàidhlig*-speakers above 50 % are marked by bold figures.

⁸ Percentages of monolingual *Gàidhlig*-speakers above 10 % are marked by bold figures.

⁹ Includes the islands of *Calbhaigh* (Calvay) and *Fuidhaigh* (Wiay).



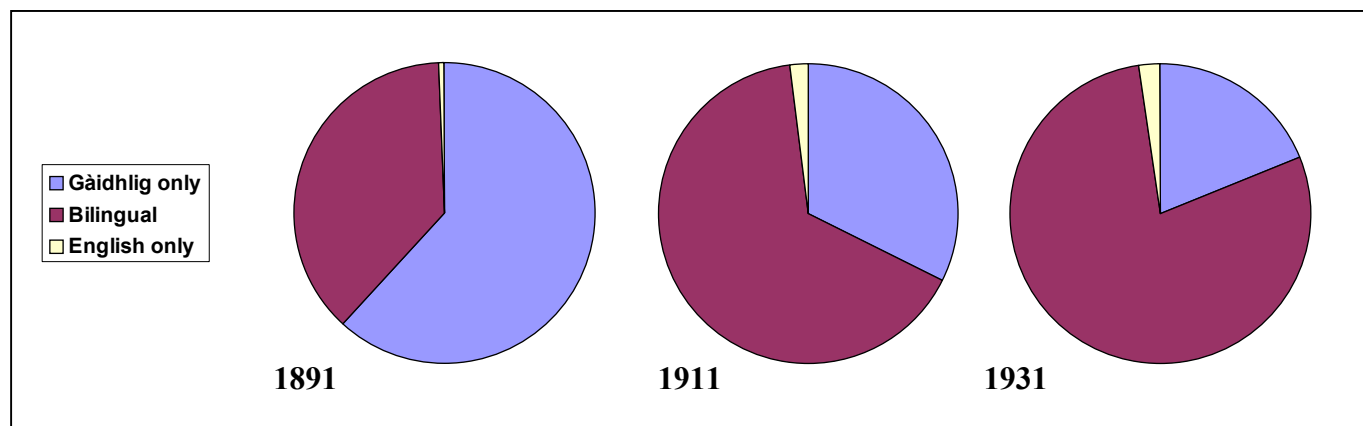


Fig. 3: Share of population speaking Gàidhlig and/or English in the study area according to census results in 1891, 1911 and 1931

The general attitude of officialdom concerning education in Gàidhlig may be highlighted by the words of the school inspector for Inverness-shire Mr. W. Jolly in his report of 1877: “*The children should be taught English before their mother tongue. English being foreign and more difficult, it could not be acquired to any purpose, if one or two years of the five or six of school life were first devoted to another language.*” He favoured the use of Gaelic orally in explaining other subjects, and later its teaching as a special subject. Rather surprisingly in modern eyes this was the most ‘enlightened’ attitude of all the school inspectors of the Highland counties in those days!

Things changed slowly. Information was given in the 1940s by a teacher of an island school in Inverness-shire where Gaelic was the mother tongue of all pupils (John L. Campbell, 1945): „*We are permitted to use Gaelic as the medium of instruction, for any subject, but as English is the official language of the school, the children will probably have to answer questions on any subject in English. H.M. Inspector, a native Gaelic speaker, did not address a single word in Gaelic to the infants on his last visit, but was entirely concerned with the correctness of their English accent. Most of the Gaelic (secondary) teachers I know teach Gaelic through the medium of English. As far as I know, there is no punishment for speaking Gaelic in class. ... The teaching of English begins practically as soon as a child is admitted to school. On the first day, he learns his name in English, and after that he is constantly learning names of things in English, simple sentences, etc., while instruction is being given in Gaelic, the aim being to bring him to the same standard as his English-speaking co-age, that standard being an English standard. ... As the children advance, and become more proficient in English, English-speaking teachers being more suitable, take charge, and there is really no great incentive to reading Gaelic if one is not going to the Leaving Certificate Examination, where it will be useful in gaining a language pass. In my day, it was not on the school curriculum at all. We had English-speaking teachers, but all the pupils spoke Gaelic, except for answering in class. ... Progress at the early stages was much slower then because we had no Gaelic-speaking teachers to explain things to us. I think the whole question of Gaelic in Highland schools wants to be revised. To my mind it is unfair to expect these children, say, at twelve years of age, to sit the identical examination undergone by English-speaking children, seeing that their instruction has of necessity been largely in Gaelic in their Infant, Junior, and Lower Classes.*” Consequences were drawn only after the war.

<i>Uibhist a Deas & Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i>						
Subject \ Census	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931
Gàidhlig-speakers (3 years +)	5,842	5,532	5,073	4,985	4,479	3,953
Percentage of total population	96.1 %	95.0 %	92.0 %	92.6 %	92.5 %	93.3 %

Table 2: Number of Gàidhlig-speakers (3 years and over) in Uibhist a Deas (South Uist) and Beinn a'Bhaoghla (Benbecula) and percentage of total population speaking Gàidhlig during 1881-1931



2.2 More Recent Developments (Census 1951–2011)

The dominance of *Gàidhlig* as a vernacular remained unchallenged also after the Second World War. The presence of military personnel on Benbecula and parts of South Uist distorted the figures in the 1961, 1971, 1981 and 1991 census enumerations. This may be clearly seen in table 13. The share of the *Gàidhlig*-speaking population in the former county council electoral divisions of *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) and *Loch Baghasdail* (Lochboisdale) remained practically the same until 1981.

<i>Uibhist a Deas & Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i>							
Subject \ Census	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
<i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers (3 years +)	3,370	3,085	2,850	2,947	2,540	2,079	1,888
Percentage of total population	89.5 %	77.2 %	73.6 %	68.2 %	62.1 %	65.0 %	60.5 %

Table 3: Number of *Gàidhlig*-speakers (3 years and over) in *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) and *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (Benbecula) and percentage of total population speaking *Gàidhlig* during 1951-2011

Educationally a more enlightened approach was undertaken in the late 1950s with the Inverness-shire Education Scheme where *Gàidhlig* was used as an initial teaching medium until the age of 8 for *Gàidhlig*-speaking pupils. The report on *Gàidhlig*-speaking schoolchildren (Scottish Council for Research in Education, 1961) provided for 1957 the following interesting figures. 401 of the 490 pupils in local primary schools in the area were first language speakers (81.8 %). In addition, 67 of the 74 secondary school children (first year) had *Gàidhlig* as first language (90.5 %). In nursery stages P1 and P2 98 pupils were first language speakers, 7 used *Gàidhlig* as second language, in total 113 of 124 pupils knew *Gàidhlig* (91.1 %). Looking deeper into the language use context *Gàidhlig* was also the language of home for all 98 first language speakers. More than half (15) of those 26 children with home language English spoke or knew some *Gàidhlig*. However, 27 of the first language speakers used only English in conversation with the teacher and 7 used English exclusively in conversation with other children in the playground.

A major impact and improvement in the use of the language in local schools had the implementation of the bilingual project between 1975 and 1981 (see Vol. 02 of this series and Murray & Morrison, 1984). All primary schools on *Uibhist a Deas* and *Eiriosgaigh* took part in this scheme from the start. Schools on *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* were later to follow when the experiment was extended to all primary schools in *Na h-Eileanan an Iar* (Western Isles). Interesting data of the 1981 census provided year-by-year information for school-aged children and this revealed remarkable differences between the two main islands:

- *Uibhist a Deas*: In fig. 4 the abilities to speak, read or write the language is depicted for children aged between 3 and 15. *Gàidhlig*-speaking was common in all ages well above the 80 % mark. Children apparently learned to read and write the language very early in primary age and were literate before they started secondary schooling.
- *Beinn a'Bhaoghla*: The picture of fig. 5 is rather different. Due to the presence of many children from English-speaking families of the armed forces the local *Gàidhlig*-speaking children were in a minority position. Apparently even they did not receive sufficient tuition in primary school to achieve literacy in young age. Only in secondary school the ability in reading and writing *Gàidhlig* was satisfactory. This means that the bilingual policy did not reach *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* in a noticeable way.



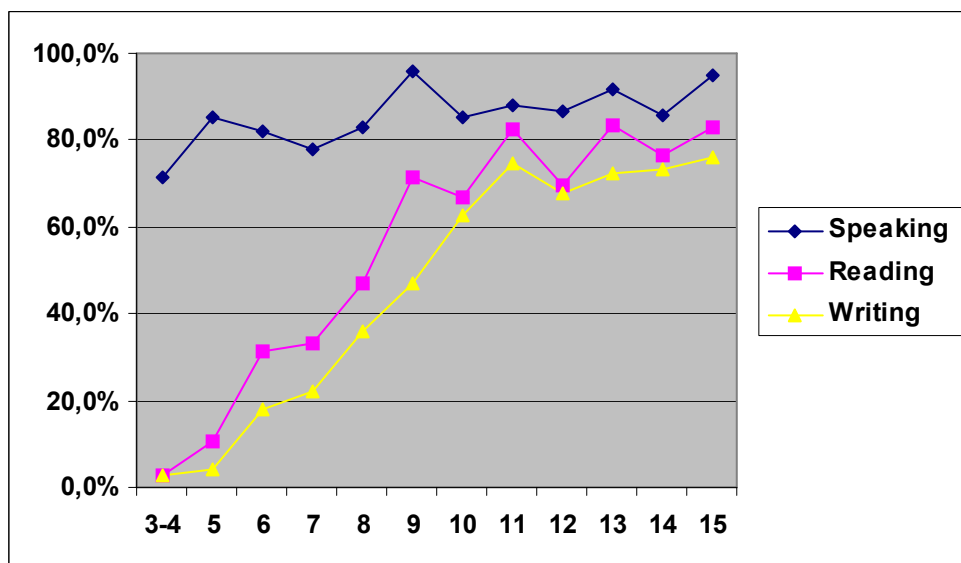


Fig. 4: Percentage of children able to speak, read or write *Gàidhlig* in different age groups in 1981 – *Uibhist a Deas*

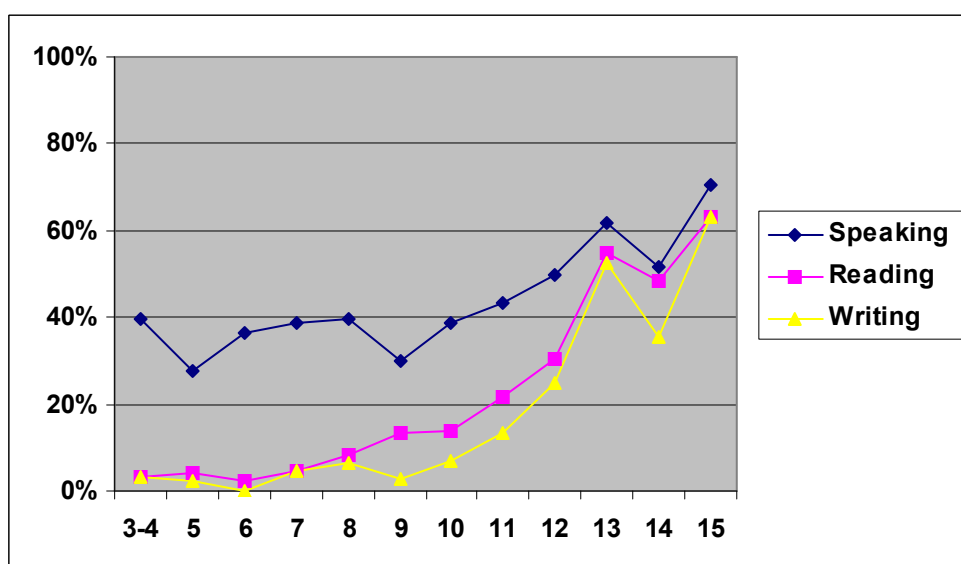


Fig. 5: Percentage of children able to speak, read or write *Gàidhlig* in different age groups in 1981 – *Beinn a'Bhaoghla*

The development of *Gàidhlig*-speaking among different age groups is outlined more generally in figures 6 and 7 for *Uibhist a Deas* proper and *Beinn a'Bhaoghla*. Obvious is the comparatively strong maintenance between 1971 and 1981 especially in the younger generation on *Uibhist a Deas*. This is a strong hint as to the success of the bilingual project. Afterwards the trend is pointing downwards, most strongly in the pre-school generation. This was despite the existence of playgroups in some communities.



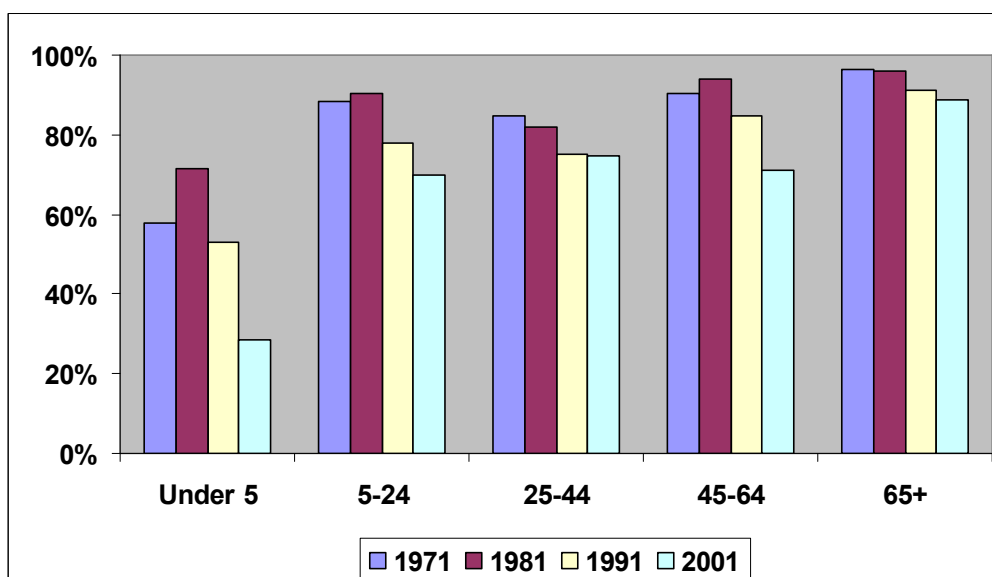


Fig. 6: Percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in different age groups between 1971 and 2001 – Area of *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist)¹⁰

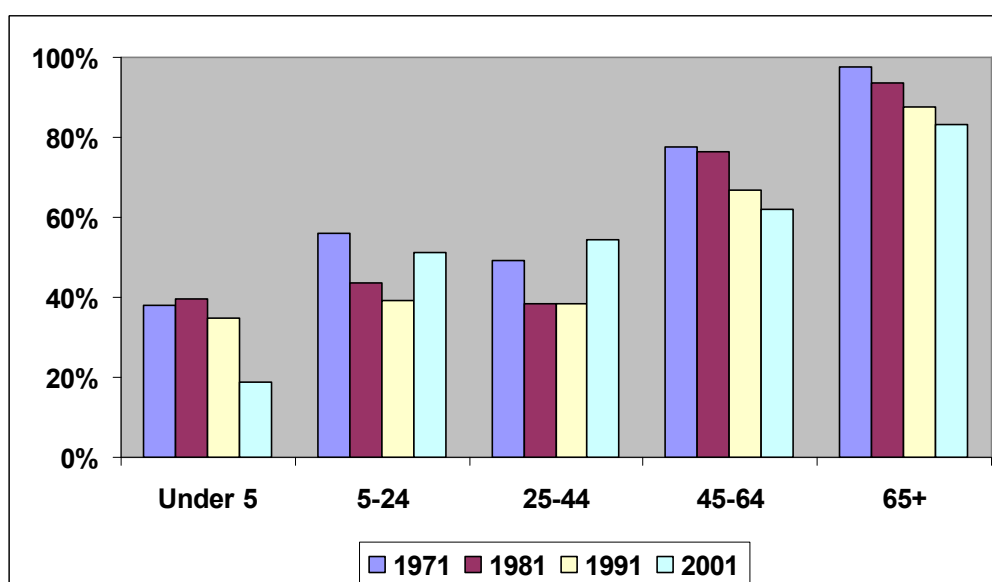


Fig. 7: Percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in different age groups between 1971 and 2001 – Area of *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (Benbecula)

Since the late 1980s the provision of GME was extended to all local primary schools (in brackets year of opening): *Eiriosgaigh* (1999), *Staoinebrig* (1987), *Iochdar* (1989), *Bail'a'Mhanaich* (1991) and *Dalabrog* (1990). These educational efforts were supported by Gaelic school clubs (*sradagan*) in *Staoinebrig* and *Dalabrog* and *cròileagan* in *Dalabrog*, *Iochdar* and *Eiriosgaigh*. In addition, *Staoinebrig* school was even designated officially a “Gaelic school” in 1998 by *Comhairle nan Eilean*¹¹. The vast majority of pupils in this school went into GME and only a few children attended the so-called “main-stream” English class then.

¹⁰ Under 5: Gàidhlig abilities in the age group 3-4 until 1991, in 2001 in all age groups 0-4.

¹¹ This designation was limited to five schools in the islands, the remaining “Gaelic schools” were situated in the western part of *Leòdhas* (Lewis).



The census of 2011 saw generally a further decrease of *Gàidhlig* speaking in the area. This was due to insufficient numbers of *Gàidhlig* medium pupils at the time, further depopulation trends and of course the immigration of monolingual English speakers. Positive news is the apparent stalling of decline in the southern part of *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) around *Loch Baghasdail* (Lochboisdale) and the island of *Eirisgiodh* (Eriskay)..

Unfortunately, the local data about the age structure of the language community were not as detailed in 2011 as in previous censuses. In contrast to the previously used small output areas, in 2011 the somewhat larger data zones were used as smallest geographical area for age distribution analysis. Accordingly, a direct comparison with 2001 data is not always possible. However, the figures of *Gàidhlig* knowledge for the 3-15 age group and the total population is provided in table 4 for local selected data zones. The intergenerational viability of these selected census data zones shows the above-mentioned positive results quite clearly. However, on *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* the percentage of younger *Gàidhlig* speakers was still unsatisfactory.

A new feature in the 2011 census was a question about the language (other than English) used at home. This saw in *Uibhist a Deas* roughly three quarters of *Gàidhlig* speakers living in households where the language was used. This was reduced to just half of speakers in the island centre of *Baile a'Mhanaich* (Balivanich). This information is also provided in table 4.

Census Data Zones	Uibhist a Deas & Beinn a’Bhaoghla – Census 2011					Gàidhlig as home language (% of speakers)
	Knowledge of Gàidhlig					
	Young age (3-15)		All ages		Difference (Language viability indicator)	
Gearraidh na Mona &Eirisgidh (Garrynamonie & Eriskay)	68	85.0%	412	79.8%	+ 5.2 %	84.8 %
Loch Baghasdail (Lochboisdale)	72	72.0%	427	71.3%	+ 0.7 %	84.3 %
lochdar (Eochar)	83	67.5%	535	73.9%	- 6.4 %	85.2 %
Creag a’Ghoraidh (Creagorry)	44	55.7%	341	68.2%	- 12.5 %	75.3 %
Baile a’Mhanaich (Balivanich)	79	53.4%	459	58.6%	- 5.2 %	66.4 %
<i>In comparison:</i> Na h- Eileanan an Iar (Western Isles)	48.8 %		61.2 %		- 12.4 %	76.8 %

Table 4: Intergenerational viability and Gàidhlig as home language in selected census data zones in comparison with the whole Na h-Eileanan an Iar (Western Isles) according to census data of 2011

At the time of the 2011 census just over 50 % of primary pupils attended GME on *Uibhist a Deas*. The corresponding figure for *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* was 30 %. This may explain the different viability figures in some places. Developments since 2001 for younger children were overall positive. Attendance of the new *Gàidhlig*-medium day nurseries at *lochdar*, *Dalabrog* and *Eiriosgaigh* were very substantial. In 2003/2004 for example 29 children were enrolled at the age of 3 or 4.



2.3 Development of literacy in Gàidhlig between 1971 and 2011

Information on the literacy of the language became available from 1971 onwards: Census questions were introduced on the ability to read or write Gàidhlig (see tables 5 and 6 below). Similar to the results for the other pre-dominantly Catholic parish of Barraigh in 1971 the reading ability of the Gàidhlig-speakers on Uibhist a Deas and Beinn a'Bhaoghla was consistently lower than those for the mainly Protestant communities of the islands further north.

	Number of Gàidhlig-speakers with ability to read Gàidhlig					Percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers with ability to read Gàidhlig				
	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Uibhist a Deas (South Uist)	1095	1395	1154	1011	880	53.1%	67.2%	65.7%	73.1%	72.8%
Beinn a'Bhaoghla (Benbecula)	445	538	483	480	457	56.8%	61.7%	61.6%	69.0%	67.6%

Table 5: Number of people able to read Gàidhlig and Gàidhlig readers as a percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers for both areas (1971-2011)

	Number of Gàidhlig-speakers with ability to write Gàidhlig					Percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers with ability to write Gàidhlig				
	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Uibhist a Deas (South Uist)	725	1049	931	816	754	35.1%	50.5%	53.0%	58.7%	62.4%
Beinn a'Bhaoghla (Benbecula)	280	407	394	403	389	35.8%	46.7%	50.2%	57.5%	57.5%

Table 6: Number of people able to write Gàidhlig and Gàidhlig writers as a percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers for both areas (1971-2011)

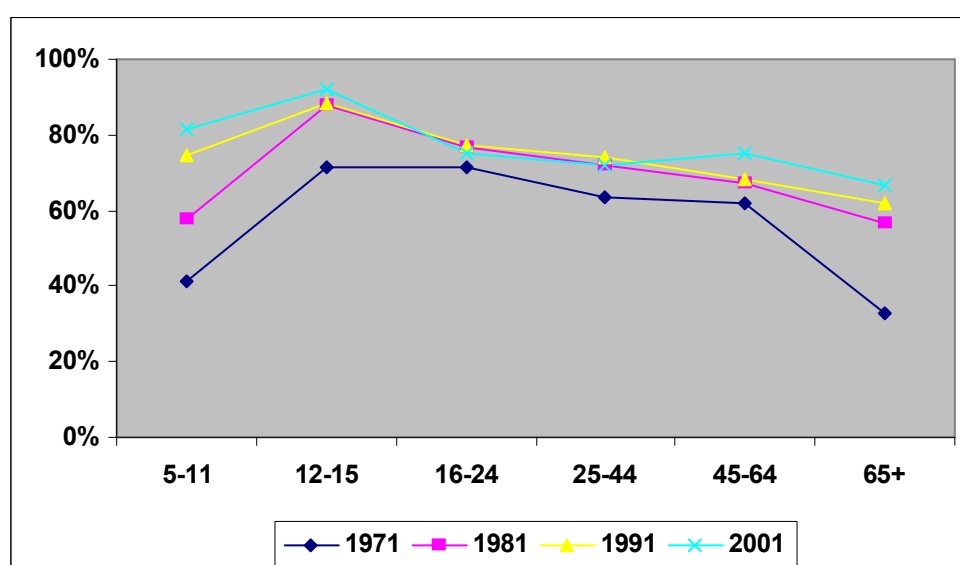


Fig. 8: Persons able to read Gàidhlig as a percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers on Uibhist a Deas in different age groups (1971-2001)



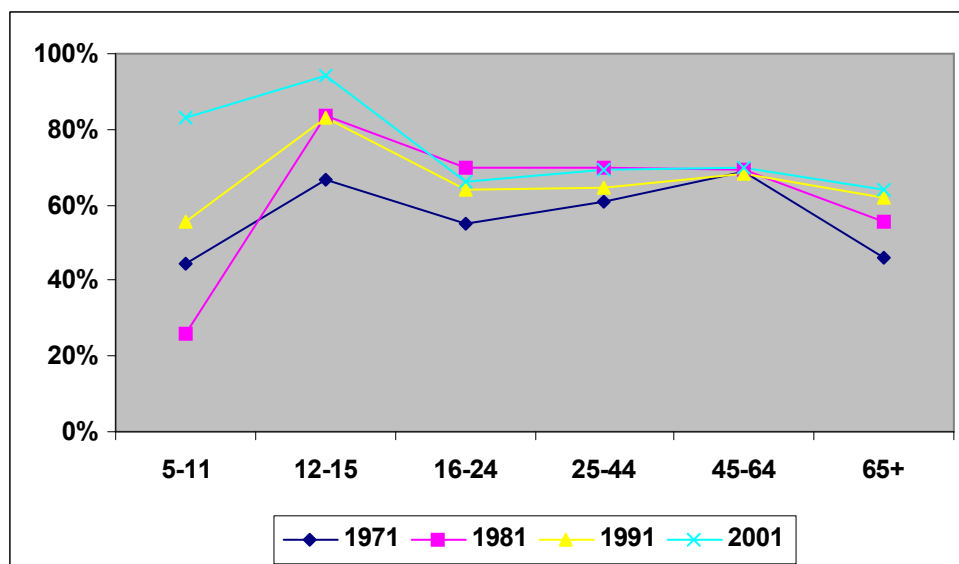


Fig. 9: Persons able to read Gàidhlig as a percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers on *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* in different age groups (1971-2001)

Just more than half of the people could read the language and roughly a third could write *Gàidhlig*. During the forthcoming years literacy improved quite substantially. In 2001 two-thirds of speakers could also read the language and more than half of them could also write *Gàidhlig*. The data on the school age generation provides some answer. In 1971 for example 275 of 505 *Gàidhlig*-speaking children aged between 5 and 14 were able to read the language in *Uibhist a Deas* (54.5 %), 90 of 165 children in *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (54.5 %). In 2001 the figures for those aged 5 to 15 were 190 of 220 (86.4 %) and 93 of 103 (90.3 %) respectively.

Literacy levels remained rather constant in the working age generations during the period between 1971 and 2001 (see figures 8 and 9). Amongst people in pensionable age and in the younger generation literacy level increased, however, during this time.

In 2011 *Gàidhlig* literacy levels remained fairly static compared with previous census (tables 5 and 6).



3 Digression: The Situation of 2001 in Focus

Census results for 2001 were the most comprehensive and detailed information base ever provided for Scotland. This was also true for the inclusion of questions on *Gàidhlig* language knowledge. Two new aspects were introduced:

1. Persons were asked whether they were „able to understand spoken Gaelic”.
2. Children under the age of 3 were enumerated regarding their language abilities.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: The more recent census data of 2011 were not as detailed as 2001 regarding generational differences in language use. Therefore 2001 is used here as baseline for research purposes. The following sections describe generally the distribution of language abilities (inter-generational and community by community) in both areas involved and the specific conditions of the younger age groups in individual primary school catchments (section 3.2).

3.1 General overview: *Gàidhlig* language capabilities in 2001

The distribution of language abilities both geographically and between generations differed widely between both islands *Uibhist a Deas* and *Beinn a'Bhaoghla*. In general, the following conclusions may be drawn from the 2001 census information:

- ***Uibhist a Deas (including Eiriosgaigh):*** Both understanding and speaking *Gàidhlig* was uniformly the norm through all generations except pre-school age (fig 10). There was a marked difference in *Gàidhlig*-speaking percentage between 2001 and 1991 by roughly 10 % in almost all age groups apart from the primary school age – maybe outcome of the impact of GME. The new category of understanding spoken *Gàidhlig* provides a very high proportion of the inhabitants of over 80 %. Inter-generational difference (table 6) between those aged 3 to 24 and the total population here is negligible at –1.1 %. This is one of the most positive results in the whole of the island chain. Small area statistics for census output areas (table 14) provide more local detail. Here the part of population able to speak the language ranged from roughly 60 % in *Loch Baghasdail* (Lochboisdale) to some 88 % in *Dalabrog* (Daliburgh). The corresponding figures for the „understands spoken Gaelic” category vary between around 76 % in *Aisgeirnis* (Askernish) and almost 98 % in *Staoinebrig* (Stoneybridge). Looking at the overall picture (fig. 12) three fifths of the population live in neighbourhoods where over 80 % know at least some *Gàidhlig* and the rest of the inhabitants lived in neighbourhoods where between 65 % and 80 % knew the language. 26 children below the age of 3 (43.3 %) were recorded with some knowledge of *Gàidhlig*. The new category of “understanding spoken Gaelic” in 2001 gave additional 152 persons (10.3 %) in the islands who were at least competent in some aspects of the language in addition to the 1,394 (71.5 %) *Gàidhlig*-speakers.
- ***Beinn a'Bhaoghla:*** Despite the increase of language knowledge in the enumerated population between 1991 and 2001 (caused by the withdrawal of many army personnel and their families) the language ability distribution according to generation had a marked tendency to decrease towards the younger speakers. Nevertheless *Gàidhlig*-speaking was widespread in all age groups (fig. 11). The intergenerational difference was somewhat higher than in neighbouring *Uibhist a Deas* – the language is not as strongly maintained. The local detail of census output areas pointed to the still existing difference between the centre of population at *Bail'a'Mhanaich* and the rural part of the island (table 17). The share of population able to speak the language ranged from roughly 32 % in parts of *Bail'a'Mhanaich* (Balivanich) to some 74 % in *Lionacleit* (Lini-clete). The corresponding figures for the „understands spoken Gaelic” category vary between around 53 % in *Bail'a'Mhanaich* and more than 87 % in *Torlum*. Fig. 13 shows that about two thirds of the population live in neighbourhoods where over 65 % of the people know at least



some *Gàidhlig* (the rural parts of the island) and the inhabitants of *Bail'a'Mhanaich* lived in neighbourhoods where between 35 % and 65 % knew the language. 16 children below the age of 3 (30.8 %) were recorded with some knowledge of *Gàidhlig*. The new category of “understanding spoken Gaelic” in 2001 gave additional 110 persons (11.6 %) in the area who were at least competent in some aspects of the language in addition to the 703 (56.3 %) *Gàidhlig*-speakers on *Beinn a'Bhaoghla*.

Age group	2001						1991		Diff. 2001 – 1991
	Knowing ¹² <i>Gàidhlig</i>		Able to speak & read <i>Gàidhlig</i>		Able to speak <i>Gàidhlig</i>		Able to speak <i>Gàidhlig</i>		
0-2	26	43.3 %	0	0.0 %	11	18.3 %	n/a	n/a	n/a
3-4	29	60.4 %	2	4.2 %	20	41.7 %	37	52.9 %	-11.2 %
5-11	146	82.5 %	97	54.8 %	120	67.8 %	178	71.5 %	-3.7 %
12-15	119	81.0 %	93	63.3 %	103	70.1 %	146	83.0 %	-12.9 %
16-24	132	84.6 %	84	53.8 %	113	72.4 %	242	81.0 %	-8.6 %
3-24	426	80.7 %	276	52.3 %	356	67.4 %	604	76.0 %	-8.6 %
All ages	1,546	81.8 %	1,011	53.5 %	1,394	71.5 %	1,756	79.2 %	- 7.7 %
Difference	-1.1 %		-1.2 %		-4.1 %		-3.2 %		

Table 7: Knowledge of *Gàidhlig* in younger age groups in *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) in 2001 and 1991

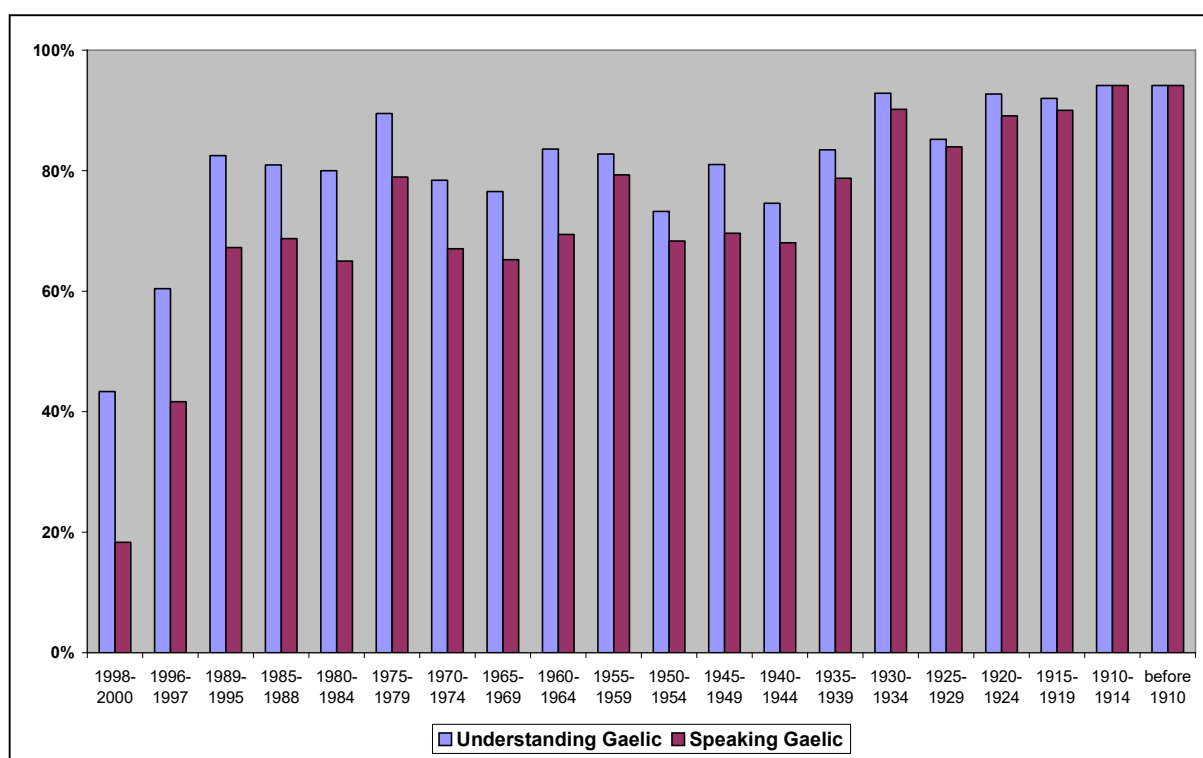


Fig. 10: Percentage of population able to understand or speak *Gàidhlig* and year of birth – area of *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) according to Census 2001

¹² Persons able to understand spoken *Gàidhlig* and/or able to speak, read or write *Gàidhlig*.



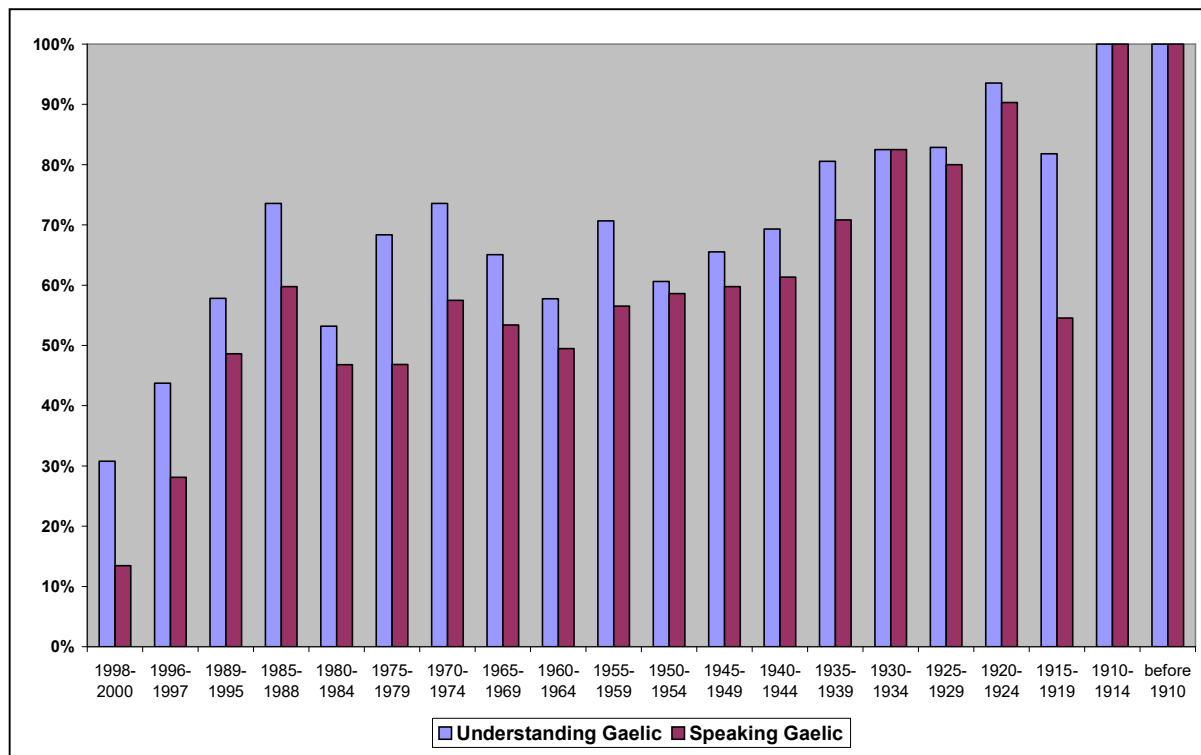


Fig. 11: Percentage of population able to understand or speak Gàidhlig and year of birth – area of *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (Benbecula) according to Census 2001

Age group	2001						1991		Diff. 2001 – 1991
	Knowing ¹³ <i>Gàidhlig</i>		Able to speak & read <i>Gàidhlig</i>		Able to speak <i>Gàidhlig</i>		Able to speak <i>Gàidhlig</i>		
0-2	16	30.8 %	0	0.0 %	7	13.5 %	n/a	n/a	n/a
3-4	14	43.8 %	0	0.0 %	9	28.1 %	25	34.7 %	-6.6 %
5-11	63	57.8 %	44	40.4 %	53	48.6 %	56	27.3 %	+21.3 %
12-15	64	73.6 %	49	56.3 %	53	60.9 %	70	60.8 %	+0.1 %
16-24	79	62.7 %	39	31.0 %	59	46.8 %	123	38.8 %	+8.0 %
3-24	220	62.1 %	132	37.3 %	174	49.2 %	274	38.6 %	+10.6 %
All ages	813	67.9 %	480	40.1 %	703	56.3 %	784	46.1 %	+10.2 %
Difference	-5.8 %		-2.8 %		-7.1 %		- 7.5 %		

Table 8: Knowledge of Gàidhlig in younger age groups in *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (Benbecula) in 2001 and 1991

Literacy levels were comparable on all three islands with more than two thirds able to read and well over half of Gàidhlig speakers able to write the language.

¹³ Persons able to understand spoken Gàidhlig, or able to speak, read or write Gàidhlig.



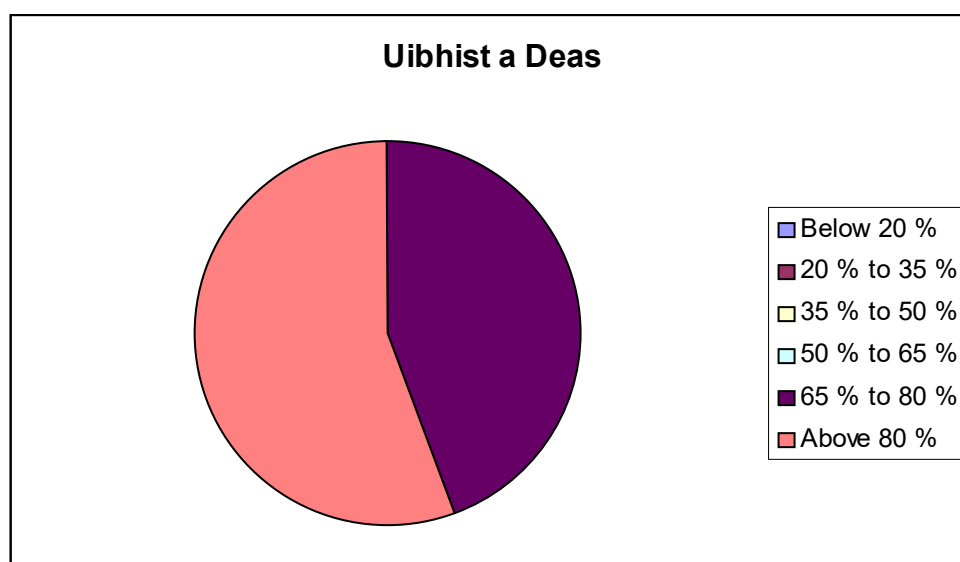


Fig. 12: Share of population living in neighbourhoods (census output areas) with different intensity of language knowledge in *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist)

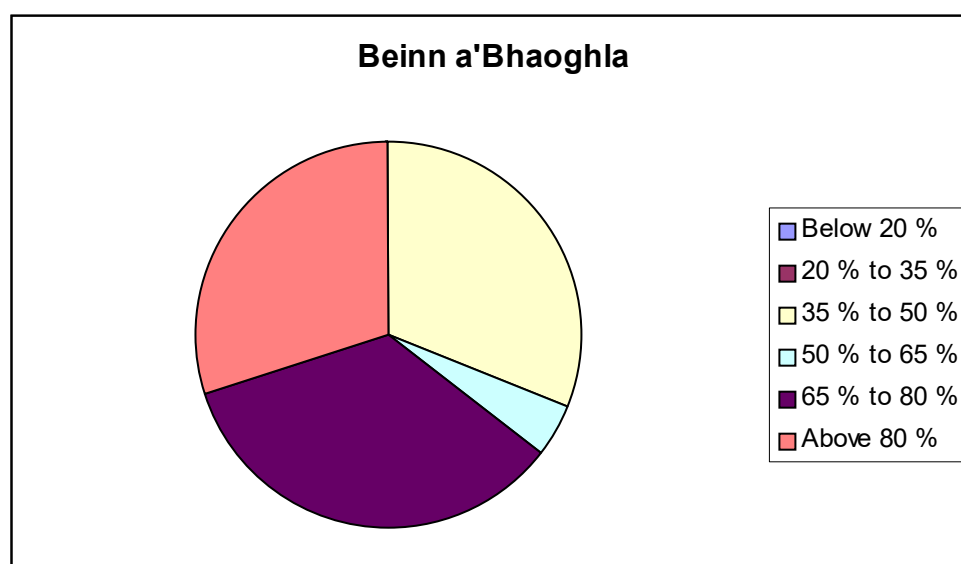


Fig. 13: Share of population living in neighbourhoods (census output areas) with different intensity of language knowledge in *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (Benbecula)

3.2 Children with knowledge of Gàidhlig in primary school catchments

Calculating statistics for the catchment areas of local primary schools enables an interesting investigation on the influence of local authority and parental attitudes towards *Gàidhlig*. It is possible to calculate numbers and percentages for the different age groups of interest for even the smallest primary schools. For this investigation statistics have been aggregated for *Gàidhlig* language abilities at pre-school age (0-4), primary school age (5-11) and secondary school age (12-15). As an additional indicator a column is provided in table 9 with the age group of 24-35 which is meant to represent the language abilities of possible parents.



Knowledge of Gàidhlig (Census 2001) in Selected Primary School Catchment Areas								
Primary School(s)	“Pre-School” Age 0-4		“Primary” Age 5-11		“Secondary” Age 12-15		“Parents” Age 25-34	
<i>Eiriosgaigh</i> (Eriskay)	2	40.0 %	10	90.9 %	8	88.9 %	6	66.7 %
<i>Dalabrog</i> (Daliburgh)	34	51.5 %	93	84.6 %	71	80.7 %	99	83.9 %
<i>Staoinebrig</i> (Stoneybridge)	10	90.9 %	13	81.3 %	8	80.0 %	21	95.5 %
<i>Iochdar</i> (Eochdar)	9	34.6 %	30	75.0 %	32	80.0 %	31	57.4 %
<i>Bail’a’Mhanaich</i> (Balivanich)	30	35.7 %	63	57.8 %	64	73.6 %	131	69.0 %

Table 9: Number and percentage of people with knowledge of Gàidhlig in selected age groups for primary school catchment areas according to the census 2001

Generally, the following conclusions may be drawn for the five school catchments involved:

- **Pre-school children:** The number of children speaking or at least understanding spoken Gàidhlig were not comparable with the percentage of the “parent generation” except for the school catchment of *Staoinebrig*. This even though there were *cròileagan* in *Dalabrog*, *Staoinebrig*, *Iochdar*, *Eiriosgaigh* and *Bail’a’Mhanaich*. But maybe the difference would have been much greater if these playgroups had not not existed.
- **Primary school children:** “Gaelic medium units” existed in all schools with 143 children out of 299 attending in the 2000-2001 school year (47.8 % of the whole school population). This is generally the largest percentage in the Outer Hebrides apart from the parish of *Uig* in *Leòdhas* (Lewis). *Sràdagan* existed in *Dalabrog* and *Staoinebrig*. All primary schools had very substantial proportions of primary school children (over 75 %) knowing the language, even in *Bail’a’Mhanaich* only a minority knew no Gàidhlig.
- **Secondary school children:** Knowledge of the language was even stronger in the secondary school ages. The approximately 80 % share included those fluent speakers (*Dalabrog* 10 out of 18, *Lionacleit* 36 out of 106 and *Eiriosgaigh* 2 out of 7 pupils) who were counted by the education authority in the 2000/2001 school year in the S1 and S2 classes. The remaining secondary school pupils got second language tuition in the first two secondary stages S1 and S2.
- **Parents:** A large proportion of the parental generation still knew the language with especially strong intensities in the southern part of *Uibhist a Deas*.

In essence educational efforts in support of Gàidhlig in the whole area were stronger (and more successful) than in almost all other parts of the Outer Hebrides.



4 Future Perspectives: 2011 and beyond

Information about *Gàidhlig*-speakers enumerated in 2011 and their associated language skills can also be used to some extent to look at the basic foundations which future language development has to consider. The knowledge of *Gàidhlig* is still common in the islands investigated and the knowledge of *Gàidhlig* is a still remarkable 74.7 % in *Uibhist a Deas*. There also the language viability indicator (LVI¹⁴) is more favourable (table 10) than in *Beinn a'Bhaoghla*. Also, the 73.6 % intensity in the young-age category (3-15 years of age) is a good basis for the future in *Uibhist a Deas*.

Area	Uibhist a Deas & Beinn a’Bhaoghla – Census 2011					Gàidhlig as home language (% of speakers)
	Knowledge of Gàidhlig					
	Young age (3-15)		All ages		Difference (Language viability indicator)	
Uibhist a Deas (South Uist)	223	73.6%	1374	74.7%	- 1.1 %	74.7 %
Beinn a’Bhaoghla (Benbecula)	123	54.2%	800	62.4%	- 8.2 %	59.6 %
In comparison: Na h- Eileanan an Iar (Western Isles)	48.8 %		61.2 %		- 12.4 %	65.6 %

Table 10: Intergenerational viability and *Gàidhlig* as home language in *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) in comparison with the whole *Na h-Eileanan an Iar* (Western Isles) according to census data of 2011

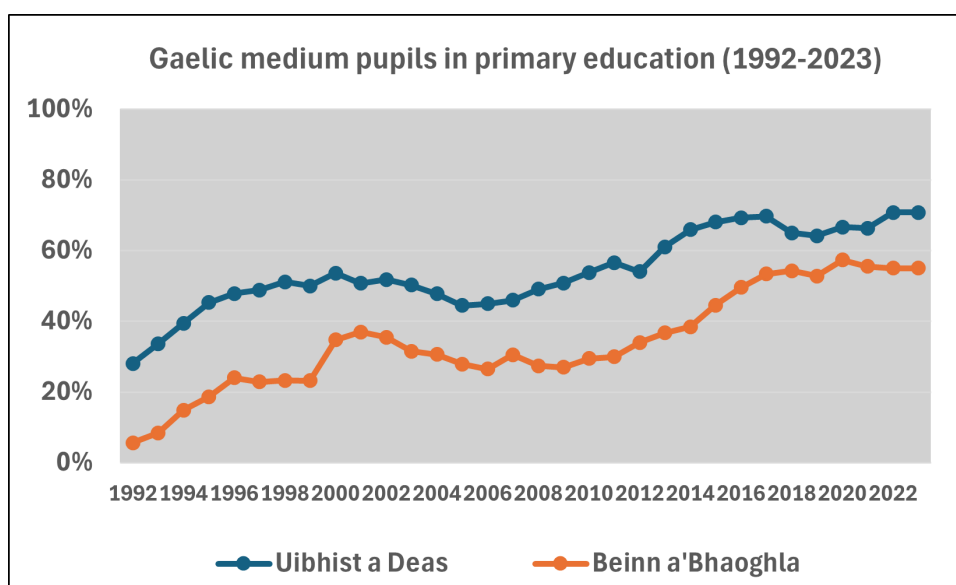


Fig. 14: Share of primary school children attending *Gàidhlig*-medium classes on *Uibhist a Deas* and *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (September 1992 – September 2023)¹⁵

¹⁴ LVI: The “Language Viability Indicator“ is a measure of the prospective reproductivity of language speakers in a community. It is here defined on the basis of knowledge of *Gàidhlig* in the census and is calculated by the difference of percentages between the age group below 16 years of age and the total population.

¹⁵ Gaelic Dept, University of Strathclyde.

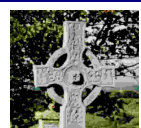


The picture in individual census data zones is similar (table 6). However, the areas with strongly “viable” language populations are concentrated in the south and centre of *Uibhist a Deas*. Less pronounced are conditions around *Iochdar* and the whole of *Beinn a'Bhaoghla*. with a far less level of LVI.

The overall temporal evolution of *Gàidhlig*-medium primary education is depicted in fig. 14 for the period 1992-2023. For example, in the 2022-23 session 90 pupils (70.9 %) attended the two GMU on *Uibhist a Deas* and 60 pupils (55.0 %) were recorded in the GMU at *Baile a'Mhanaich*.

This bodes well for the future of *Gàidhlig* on *Uibhist a Deas*.

In conclusion: *Uibhist a Deas* ranks currently among the few island locations where intergenerational language transmission works to a considerable degree. This is, however, only slowing down decline but it is still not enough to counter the recent trend. The apparent increase of *Gàidhlig*-speaking on *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* since 1991 was only caused by the closure of military installations and the leaving of army personnel and their families. This one-off effect should not gloss over the relative weakness of language transmission on this island.



I. Supplementary Tables

Gaelic and Gaelic only between 1881 and 1971: <i>Uibhist a Deas & Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> ¹⁶	Total Popula- tion	Gàidhlig and Eng- lish	Gàidhlig but no English
Census/Selected Area			
1881 (Speaking „habitually” Gaelic)	6,078	5,842	
----- Inhabited islands (included in the above) ---			
<i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist)	3,810	3,663	
<i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> (Benbecula)	1,661	1,589	
<i>Eiriosgaigh</i> (Eriskay)	464	461	
<i>Fladaigh</i> (Fladda)	87	86	
<i>Griomasaigh</i> (Grimisay)	28	25	
<i>Calbhaigh</i> (Calvay)	15	15	
<i>Fuidhaigh</i> (Wiay)	5	5	
----- Census registration districts (differing from areas above) ---			
<i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> (Benbecula)	1,781	1,705	
<i>Tobha Mòr</i> (Howmore)	1,968	1,869	
<i>Baghasdail</i> (Boisdale)	2,329	2,268	
1891	5,821	2,102	3,430
----- Inhabited islands (included in the above) ---			
<i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist) – island proper only	3,708	1,263	2,250
<i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> (Benbecula) – island proper only	1,534	563	912
<i>Eiriosgaigh</i> (Eriskay)	454	239	194
<i>Fladaigh</i> (Fladda)	76	23	52
<i>Griomasaigh</i> (Grimisay)	39	18	18
<i>Fuidhaigh</i> (Wiay)	10	5	4
----- Census registration districts (differing from areas above) ---			
<i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> (Benbecula)	1,659	609	986
<i>Tobha Mòr</i> (Howmore)	1,879	632	1,152
<i>Baghasdail</i> (Boisdale)	2,283	861	1,292
1901	5,514	2,573	2,500
----- Inhabited islands (included in the above) ---			
<i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist) – island proper only	3,541	1,601	1,645
<i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> (Benbecula) – island proper only	1,417	738	575
<i>Eiriosgaigh</i> (Eriskay)	478	204	236
<i>Fladaigh</i> (Fladda)	35	17	15
<i>Griomasaigh</i> (Grimisay)	40	10	28
<i>Fuidhaigh</i> (Wiay)	4	3	1
----- Census registration districts (differing from areas above) ---			
<i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> (Benbecula)	1,497	768	619
<i>Tobha Mòr</i> (Howmore)	1,726	806	789
<i>Baghasdail</i> (Boisdale)	2,293	999	1,092
----- Electoral divisions ---			
<i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> (Benbecula)	1,497	768	619
<i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist)	1,690	806	789
<i>Baghasdail</i> (Boisdale)	2,303	980	1,092

Table 11: Number of persons speaking Gàidhlig between 1881 and 1901 – selected areas (civil parish, registration districts, electoral divisions or inhabited islands)

¹⁶ Civil parish of *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist).

Gaelic and Gaelic only between 1911 and 1971: <i>Uibhist a Deas & Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i>	Total Popula- tion	<i>Gàidhlig</i> and Eng- lish	<i>Gàidhlig</i> but no English
Census/Selected Area			
1911 <i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist) CP	5,383	3,337	1,648
1921 <i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist) CP	4,844	3,337	1,142
1931 <i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist) CP	4,236	3,185	768
1951 <i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist) CP	3,764	3,076	294
1961 <i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist) CP	3,760	2,948	137
----- County council electoral divisions -----			
<i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist) CCED	795	655	50
<i>Loch Baghasdail</i> (Lochboisdale) CCED	1,653	1,472	53
<i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> (Benbecula) CCED	1,312	821	34
1971 ¹⁷ <i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist) CP	3,871	2,820	30
----- County council electoral divisions -----			
<i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist) CCED	715	600	*
<i>Loch Baghasdail</i> (Lochboisdale) CCED	1,770	1,440	*
<i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> (Benbecula) CCED	1,370	775	*

Table 12: Number of persons speaking *Gàidhlig* between 1911 and 1971 – selected areas (civil parish, county council electoral divisions)

¹⁷ Due to rounding of figures to the nearest 0 and 5 it is impossible to provide exact “Gaelic only” numbers in 1971. The figures should read “between 2,818 and 2,822 Gaelic and English” and “between 26 and 34 Gaelic only” respectively.



Number of persons and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in districts of <i>Uibhist a Deas</i> – 1881 - 1911							
Area ¹⁸	All persons speaking Gàidhlig ¹⁹				Monolingual share of all Gàidhlig-speakers ²⁰		
	1881	1891	1901	1911	1891	1901	1911
<i>Aird a'Mhachair & Baile Gharbhaidh</i> (Ardivachar & Bargarvie)	1.869 95.0%	201 95.3%	170 95.5%	148 96.1%	108 53.7%	99 58.2%	46 31.1%
<i>Aird na Monadh & Carnan</i> (Ardnamona & Carnan)	407 94.9%	407 94.4%	364 93.1%	299 98.4%	284 70.0%	166 45.6%	111 37.1%
<i>Loch Carnan</i> (Lochcarnan)	274 95.5%	276 97.5%	266 96.0%	304 95.0%	187 67.8%	105 39.5%	113 37.2%
<i>Stadhlaigearraidh</i> (Stilligarry)	113 80.7%	117 98.3%	115 91.3%	191 94.6%	67 57.3%	46 40.0%	52 27.2%
<i>Tobha Mòr & Tobha Beag</i> (Howmore & Howbeg)	308 99.7%	289 95.1%	257 93.5%	230 94.3%	186 64.4%	154 59.9%	88 38.3%
<i>Staoinebrig</i> (Stoneybridge)	273 94.8%	269 95.7%	243 94.2%	226 94.6%	185 68.8%	146 60.1%	73 32.3%
<i>Loch Euphort & Cill Donnain</i> (Locheport & Kildonan)	127 96.2%	107 96.4%	75 86.2%	69 94.5%	70 65.4%	37 49.3%	26 37.7%
<i>Loch Sgioport</i> (Gerinish & Loch Skiport)	146 91.8%	118 87.4%	105 78.4%	95 92.2%	65 55.1%	36 34.3%	31 32.6%
<i>Ceann a Tuath Loch B. & Lasgair</i> (North Lochboisdale & Laskir)	220 100%	270 86.8%	287 91.4%	319 88.6%	131 48.5%	109 38.0%	51 16.0%
<i>Ceann a Deas Loch B. & Gleann Dail</i> (South Lochboisdale & Glendale)	189 99.0%	163 92.6%	150 94.3%	146 93.6%	153 93.9%	59 39.3%	45 30.8%
<i>Baile Mhuilinn & Loch Aoineart</i> (Milton & Loch Eynort)	71 100%	70 98.6%	51 87.9%	56 96.6%	34 48.6%	23 45.1%	16 28.6%
<i>Dalabrog</i> (Daliburgh)	372 95.6%	226 95.4%	222 82.2%	239 91.6%	113 50.0%	93 41.9%	64 26.8%
<i>Gearraidh Sheilidh & Aisgeirnis</i> (Garyhallie & Askernish)	99 91.7%	124 92.5%	100 88.5%	47 47.5%	61 49.2%	22 22.0%	
<i>Cille Pheadair</i> (Kilpheder)	244 100%	232 97.9%	210 95.5%	197 95.6%	187 80.6%	75 35.7%	51 25.9%
<i>Baghasdail</i> (Boisdale)	415 92.2%	397 97.5%	360 91.6%	343 90.3%	266 67.0%	270 75.0%	119 34.7%
<i>Gearraidh na Monadh</i> (Garrynamonie)	113 100%	115 98.3%	99 98.0%	112 95.7%	75 65.2%	78 78.8%	47 42.0%
<i>Smeircleit</i> (Smercleite)	170 100%	157 95.2%	131 93.6%	232 90.6%	90 57.3%	88 67.2%	83 35.8%
<i>Eilean Eiriosgaidh</i> (Eriskay)	464 99.6%	424 93.4%	440 92.1%	423 93.4%	194 45.8%	236 53.6%	123 29.1%

Table 13: Number of persons speaking Gàidhlig and all Gàidhlig-speakers as share of population in *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) between 1881 and 1911

¹⁸ Enumeration division or island.

¹⁹ Percentages of Gàidhlig-speakers above 50 % are marked by bold figures.

²⁰ Percentages of monolingual Gàidhlig-speakers above 10 % are marked by bold figures.



Number of persons and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in districts of <i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> – 1881 - 1911							
Area ²¹	All persons speaking Gàidhlig ²²				Monolingual share of all Gàidhlig-speakers ²³		
	1881	1891	1901	1911	1891	1901	1911
<i>Eilean Fhlodaigh</i> (Isle of Flodda)	86 98.9%	75 98.7%	32 88.9%	41 95.3%	52 69.3%	15 46.9%	15 36.6%
<i>Gramasdail</i> (Gramsdale)	113 100%	87 98.9%	98 93.3%	80 96.4%	48 55.2%	41 41.8%	25 31.3%
<i>Baile a'Mhanaich</i> (Balivanich)	166 96.5%	114 99.1%	110 88.0%	109 87.9%	74 64.9%	28 25.5%	29 26.6%
<i>Uachdar & Dùn Gainmhich</i> (Uachdar & Dunganchy)	200 94.3%	202 95.3%	175 94.6%	141 94.0%	141 69.8%	79 45.1%	57 40.4%
<i>Griminis</i> (Griminish)	393 96.6%	170 92.9%	147 88.6%	157 91.8%	116 68.2%	46 31.3%	40 25.5%
<i>Baile nan Cailleach & Aird</i> (Nunton & Aird)	194 97.0%	171 94.5%	159 97.0%	147 75.8%	86 50.3%	54 34.0%	
<i>Torlum & Lionacleit</i> (Torlum & Liniclete)	429 96.8%	375 96.2%	309 93.4%	316 95.2%	237 63.2%	142 46.0%	126 39.9%
<i>Càrnán</i> (Carnan)	81 81.8%	150 97.4%	126 93.3%	108 88.5%	59 39.3%	65 51.8%	71 65.7%
<i>Creag a'Ghoraidh & Hacleit</i> (Creagorry & Hacklet)	207 96.3%	183 95.3%	177 93.7%	154 96.9%	90 49.2%	88 49.7%	65 42.2%
<i>Griomasaigh</i> (Isle of Grimisay)	25 89.3%	36 92.3%	38 95.0%	35 97.2%	18 50.0%	28 73.7%	17 48.6%
<i>Calbhaigh & Fuidheigh</i> ²⁴ (Calvay & Wiay)	20 100%	9 90.0%	4 100%	*	4 44.4%	1 25.0%	*

Table 14: Number of persons speaking Gàidhlig and all Gàidhlig-speakers as share of population in *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (Benbecula) between 1881 and 1911

²¹ Enumeration division or island.

²² Percentages of Gàidhlig-speakers above 50 % are marked by bold figures.

²³ Percentages of monolingual Gàidhlig-speakers above 10 % are marked by bold figures.

²⁴ *Calbhaigh* was deserted after 1881, *Fuidheigh* was unpopulated in 1911.



Percentage of population speaking <i>Gàidhlig</i> but no English in island parishes of former Inverness-shire ²⁵					
Age group	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931
3-4	78.6 %	76.2 %	78.9 %	69.2 %	73.9 %
5-9	52.2 %	46.6 %	39.2 %	22.9 %	21.6 %
10-14	21.6 %	13.8 %	4.8 %	1.8 %	1.1 %
15-19	25.2 %	9.5 %	2.3 %	0.7 %	0.7 %
20-24	31.1 %	10.9 %	3.3 %	1.1 %	0.6 %
25-29	34.7 %	16.2 %	3.7 %	2.2 %	0.6 %
30-34	37.6 %	25.4 %	7.0 %	1.9 %	1.9 %
35-39	38.0 %	31.8 %	11.8 %	2.8 %	1.8 %
40-44	47.2 %	34.0 %	19.2 %	5.3 %	1.6 %
45-49	47.0 %	33.6 %	24.5 %	9.0 %	2.8 %
50-54	54.4 %	43.5 %	30.1 %	16.9 %	5.3 %
55-59	56.5 %	43.7 %	32.3 %	24.7 %	9.5 %
60-64	66.4 %	53.5 %	39.2 %	29.8 %	16.9 %
65-69	66.1 %	52.8 %	43.4 %	32.6 %	24.8 %
70-74	60.6 %	56.5 %	48.5 %	40.1 %	33.7 %
75-79	67.2 %	67.5 %	55.7 %	46.8 %	36.4 %
80 and over	74.1 %	71.5 %	65.4 %	58.7 %	47.2 %
Total "Gaelic only"	43.9 %	33.3 %	24.0 %	16.0 %	12.5 %

Table 15: Percentage of persons speaking *Gàidhlig* but no English (aged three years and over) for different age groups in island parishes of former Inverness-shire according to census data from 1891 to 1931.

Number of persons and percentage of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers in former County Council Electoral Divisions (Inverness-shire) (Population aged 3 years and over)						
Area	1961/71 Code	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
<i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> (Benbecula)	BB	855 65.2 %	783 60.9 %	872 46.2 %	784 46.1 %	696 58.1 %
<i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist)	SU	705 88.7 %	612 88.7 %	671 85.9 %	670 78.1 %	544 70.0 %
<i>Loch Baghasdail</i> (Lochboisdale)	LB	1,525 92.3 %	1,455 88.2 %	1,404 91.1 %	1,086 79.9 %	839 71.5 %

Table 16: Number of persons speaking *Gàidhlig* and all *Gàidhlig*-speakers as share of population (aged three and over) for pre-1975 county council electoral divisions according to census data from 1961 to 2001

²⁵ Islands of *Barraigh* (Barra), *Uibhist* (Uist), *Na Hearadh* (Harris), *An t-Eilean Sgitheanach* (Skye) and *Na h-Eileanan Tarsuinn* (Small Isles).



Gaelic knowledge according to age groups and whether born in Scotland <i>Census 1981: Uibhist a Deas</i>²⁶						
Map No	Census output area ²⁷	Age groups				Born in Scotland ²⁸
		3 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+	
01	<i>Eilean Eiriosgaidh</i> (Isle of Eriskay)	82 98.8%	44 88.0%	29 93.5%	29 100%	184 95.3%
02 + 03	<i>Gearraidh na Monadh</i> (Garrynamonie)	129 91.5%	47 94.0%	58 96.7%	46 100%	279 95.5%
04 + 05	<i>Cille Pheadair</i> (Kilpheder)	123 94.6%	52 96.3%	61 100%	44 95.7%	275 97.2%
06 + 07	<i>Loch Baghasdail</i> (Lochboisdale)	136 86.8%	51 81.0%	72 94.7%	29 90.6%	287 88.6%
08 + 09	<i>Dalabrog</i> (Daliburgh)	112 86.2%	65 81.3%	48 94.1%	64 95.5%	285 88.5%
10 + 11	<i>Cill Donnain</i> (Kildonan)	74 81.3%	35 74.5%	43 89.6%	30 100%	181 91.0%
12 + 13	<i>Staoinebrig & Tobha Mòr</i> (Stoneybridge & Howmore)	90 96.8%	35 83.3%	39 92.9%	34 94.4%	198 94.3%
14 + 15	<i>Geirinis & Stadhlagearraidh</i> (Gerinish & Stilligarry)	39 83.0%	35 85.4%	18 100%	18 94.7%	108 98.2%
16	<i>Loch a'Charnain & Aird Mhòr</i> (Loch Carnan & Airdmhor)	54 90.0%	12 48.0%	24 85.7%	16 88.9%	103 93.6%
17 + 18	<i>Buaile Dubh & Iochdar</i> (Bualdhu & Iochdar)	45 68.2%	42 76.4%	39 86.7%	38 97.4%	163 84.5%
51	<i>Creag a'Ghoraidh</i> (Creagorry)	93 86.9%	55 84.6%	43 84.3%	30 88.2%	222 91.7%
52 - 54	<i>Torlum, Griminis & Lionacleit</i> (Torlum, Griminish & Lionacleit)	136 93.2%	56 83.6%	47 85.5%	27 90.0%	260 93.5%
55 + 56	<i>Aird & Baile nan Cailleach</i>	50 68.5%	28 84.8%	36 85.7%	20 100%	129 81.1%
57 + 58	<i>Uachdar & Gramasdail</i>	24 63.2%	25 71.4%	22 95.7%	13 100%	81 80.2%
59	<i>Bail'a'Mhanaich</i> (Balivanich)	34 17.9%	38 23.2%	7 36.8%	5 83.3%	82 53.2%
	<i>Bail'a'Mhanaich</i> (Balivanich)	31 11.1%	29 10.7%	12 34.3%	3 75.0%	68 48.9%
Total	<i>Uibhist a Deas</i> (South Uist)	1,256 68.7%	648 59.0%	605 88.1%	453 96.0%	2,920 87.7%

Table 17: Population with Gàidhlig knowledge in output areas of *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) according to age group and birthplace in 1981

²⁶ Figures may not add up exactly because of measures to keep returns anonymous.

²⁷ A more detailed list of all locations in each output area is to be found in section IV.

²⁸ Scottish born population aged 3 years and over.



Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers ²⁹ <i>Uibhist a Deas</i>								
Map No	Census output area ³⁰	1981		1991		2001		
01	<i>Eiriosgaigh</i> (Eriskay) a	182	94.3 %	79	76.0 %	104	78.2 %	
	<i>Eiriosgaigh</i> (Eriskay) b			56	83.6 %			
02	<i>Gearraidh na Monaidh</i> (Garrynamonie)	280	94.3 %	122	92.4 %	78	83.9 %	
03	<i>Cille Bhrighde</i> (Kilbride)			90	83.3 %	82	73.2 %	
04	<i>Cill Pheadair</i> (Kilpheder)	275	94.8 %	135	91.2 %	93	72.1 %	
05	<i>Baghasdail</i> (Boisdale)			95	97.9 %	80	86.0 %	
06	<i>Loch Baghasdail</i> (Lochboisdale) a	292	89.0 %	192	73.9 %	125	61.0 %	
07	<i>Loch Baghasdail</i> (Lochboisdale) b					43	59.7 %	
08	<i>Dalabrog</i> (Daliburgh) a	284	86.6 %	157	77.7 %	110	75.2 %	
09	<i>Dalabrog</i> (Daliburgh) b			88	77.9 %	55	88.7 %	
10	<i>Aisgeirnis</i> (Askernish)	184	86.4 %	72	66.1 %	76	58.9 %	
11	<i>Cill Donnain</i> (Kildonan)			98	88.3 %	85	76.6 %	
12	<i>Staoinebrig</i> (Stoneybridge)	202	94.8 %	107	93.0 %	89	88.1 %	
13	<i>Tobha</i> (Tote)			57	81.4 %	47	66.2 %	
14	<i>Geirinis</i> (Gerinish)	107	85.6 %	117	79.1 %	47	63.5 %	
15	<i>Stadhlaigearraidh</i> (Stilligarry)					35	64.8 %	
16	<i>Aird Mhòr</i> (Ardmhor)	102	77.9 %	96	70.1 %	64	60.4 %	
17	<i>Carnan</i> (Carnan)	167	81.5 %	52	65.8 %	100	67.6 %	
18	<i>Aird a'Mhachair</i> (Ardivachar)			143	76.4 %	81	72.3 %	

Table 18: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers for the census output areas in *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) according to data from 1981 to 2001

<i>Uibhist a Deas: Gàidhlig-speaking in Age Groups (1971-2001)</i>								
Age group	1971 ³¹		1981		1991		2001	
0-2³²	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	11	18.3 %
3-4	65 (+13)	57.8 %	55	71.4 %	37	52.9 %	20	41.7 %
5-24	710 (+5)	88.3 %	830	90.3 %	566	78.0 %	336	70.0 %
25-44	410 (+1)	84.7 %	416	82.1 %	432	75.1 %	360	74.7 %
45-64	435 (+3)	90.3 %	431	93.9 %	434	84.6 %	390	71.0 %
65 +	410 (+5)	96.5 %	345	95.8 %	287	91.1 %	295	88.9 %
Total (3+)	2,040 (+27)	88.3 %	2,075	85.4 %	1,756	79.2 %	1,383	73.1 %
Born in Scotland	n/a	n/a	2,059	87.9 %	1,753	87.6 %	1,354	77.9 %

Table 19: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in different age groups in *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) between 1971 and 2001

²⁹ Statistical base is the population aged 3 years and over for 1981 and 1991 and the total population in 2001.

³⁰ Information on data for individual census output areas may not be available for every census to prevent the disclosure of individuals. A more detailed list of all locations in each output area is to be found in section IV.

³¹ Additional approximated returns on "Gaelic only" in brackets.

³² Information only available since 2001.



Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers ³³ <i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i>								
Map No	Census output area	1981		1991		2001		
51	<i>Creag a'Ghoraidh</i> (Creagorry) a	225	87.9 %	121	92.4 %	136	69.7 %	
	<i>Creag a'Ghoraidh</i> (Creagorry) b			122	80.3 %			
52	<i>Torlum</i> (Torlum)	278	93.3 %	164	84.1 %	67	72.8 %	
53	<i>Lionacleit</i> (Liniclete)					66	74.2 %	
54	<i>Griminis</i> (Griminish)			84	79.2 %	103	66.0 %	
55	<i>Aird</i> (Aird)	134	80.7 %	114	62.3 %	69	59.0 %	
56	<i>Bail'a'Mhanaich</i> (Balivanich) a					24	43.6 %	
57	<i>Bail'a'Mhanaich</i> (Balivanich) b	87	80.6 %	86	71.7 %	57	32.8 %	
58	<i>Uachdar</i> (Uachdar)					98	62.4 %	
59	<i>Bail'a'Mhanaich</i> (Balivanich) c	82	21.6 %	93	33.6 %	83	38.8 %	
	<i>Bail'a'Mhanaich</i> (Balivanich) d	67	12.3 %					

Table 20: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers for the census output areas in *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (Benbecula) between 1981 and 2001

<i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla: Gàidhlig-speaking in Age Groups (1971-2001)</i>								
Age group	1971 ³⁴		1981		1991		2001	
0-2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7	13.5 %
3-4	15 (+4)	38.0 %	25	39.7 %	25	34.7 %	9	28.1 %
5-24	265 (+2)	56.2 %	338	43.8 %	249	39.1 %	165	51.2 %
25-44	205	49.4 %	228	38.6 %	238	38.4 %	206	54.4 %
45-64	175	77.8 %	173	76.3 %	174	66.7 %	207	62.2 %
65 +	120 (+2)	97.6 %	104	93.7 %	98	87.5 %	109	83.2 %
Total (3 years and over)	775 (+8)	60.9 %	872	46.2 %	784	46.1 %	696	58.1 %
Born in Scotland	n/a	n/a	836	69.7 %	768	70.5 %	665	66.0 %

Table 21: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in different age groups in *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (Benbecula) according to data from 1971 to 2001

³³ Statistical base is the population aged 3 years and over for 1981 and 1991 and the total population in 2001.

³⁴ Additional approximated returns on "Gaelic only" in brackets.



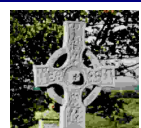
Map No.	Output Area	Knowledge of Gàidhlig in 2001					
		Young age (0-24)		All ages		Difference (Language viability indicator)	Born in Scotland (Language community indicator)
01	<i>Eiriosgaigh</i> (Eriskay)	29	85.3 %	112	84.2 %	+ 1.1 %	90.3 %
02	<i>Gearraidh na Monaidh</i> (Garrynamonie)	15	93.8 %	83	89.3 %	+ 4.5 %	91.1 %
03	<i>Cille Bhrighde</i> (Kilbride)	29	72.5 %	93	83.0 %	- 10.5 %	85.3 %
04	<i>Cill Pheadair</i> (Kilpheder)	36	85.7 %	108	83.7 %	+ 2.0 %	85.6 %
05	<i>Baghasdail</i> (Boisdale)	17	81.0 %	87	93.6 %	- 12.6 %	94.6 %
06	<i>Loch Baghasdail a</i> (Lochboisdale) a	50	64.1 %	149	72.7 %	- 8.6 %	76.6 %
07	<i>Loch Baghasdail b</i> (Lochboisdale) b	13	68.4 %	55	76.4 %	- 8.0 %	78.6 %
08	<i>Dalabrog</i> (Daliburgh) a	30	85.7 %	126	86.3 %	- 0.6 %	87.9 %
09	<i>Dalabrog</i> (Daliburgh) b	14	87.5 %	58	93.6 %	- 6.1 %	95.1 %
10	<i>Aisgeirnis</i> (Askernish)	26	63.6 %	91	70.5 %	- 6.9 %	76.3 %
11	<i>Cill Donain</i> (Kildonan)	37	97.4 %	94	84.7 %	+ 12.7 %	91.3 %
12	<i>Staoinebrig</i> (Stoneybridge)	32	97.0 %	95	94.1 %	+ 2.9 %	97.9 %
13	<i>Tobha</i> (Tote)	11	64.7 %	55	77.5 %	- 12.8 %	81.5 %
14	<i>Geirinis</i> (Gerinish)	16	69.6 %	54	73.0 %	- 3.4 %	81.8 %
15	<i>Stadhlaigearraidh</i> (Stilligarry)	7	63.6 %	39	72.2 %	- 8.6 %	82.6 %
16	<i>Aird Mhòr</i> (Ardmhor)	22	71.0 %	73	68.9 %	+ 2.1 %	75.8 %
17	<i>Carnan</i> (Carnan)	35	62.5 %	110	74.3 %	- 11.8 %	79.4 %
18	<i>Aird a'Mhachair</i> (Ardivachar)	31	91.2 %	90	80.4 %	+ 10.8 %	87.0 %

Table 22: Intergenerational viability and Gàidhlig-speakers born in Scotland in *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) according to census data of 2001



Map No.	Output Area	Knowledge of Gàidhlig in 2001					
		Young age (0-24)		All ages		Difference (Language viability indicator)	Born in Scotland (Language community indicator)
51	<i>Creag a'Ghoraidh</i> (Creagorry)	49	68.1 %	155	79.5 %	- 11.4 %	83.5 %
52	<i>Torlum</i> (Torlum)	26	81.3%	76	82.6 %	- 1.3 %	87.2 %
53	<i>Lionacleit</i> (Liniclete)	14	58.3 %	74	83.2 %	- 24.8 %	84.9 %
54	<i>Griminis</i> (Griminish)	39	81.3 %	119	76.3 %	+ 5.0 %	80.0 %
55	<i>Aird</i> (Aird)	13	52.0 %	79	67.5 %	- 15.5 %	70.3 %
56	<i>Bail'a'Mhanaich a</i> (Balivanich) a	7	36.8 %	31	56.4 %	- 19.6 %	66.0 %
57	<i>Bail'a'Mhanaich b</i> (Balivanich) b	16	33.3 %	75	43.1 %	- 9.8 %	57.7 %
58	<i>Uachdar</i> (Uachdar)	34	73.9 %	117	74.5 %	- 0.6 %	78.4 %
59	<i>Bail'a'Mhanaich c</i> (Balivanich) c	38	41.3 %	103	48.1 %	- 6.8 %	53.3 %

Table 23: Intergenerational viability and Gàidhlig-speakers born in Scotland in *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (Benbecula) according to census data of 2001



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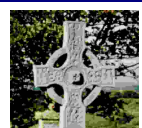
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III. Some Valuable Comments about Census Information

The interpretation of census figures (derived statistics in particular) is not as straightforward as the pure numbers might suggest. The author has taken great pains to compare like with like and the calculated tables with greatest geographical detail and age group information as possible. But the differences of census questions, enumeration districts and information details between years are quite substantial. It is therefore very important to notice the following facts:

1. Questions on *Gàidhlig* have been raised in census enumerations in Scotland since 1881. In this first instance, however, it was asked whether the person “speaks Gaelic habitually” and the information was provided by the enumerator. From 1891 onwards this wording was changed into “speaks Gaelic” and the information was given by the head of the household. Accordingly direct comparison of the results of 1881 and later years is not possible.
2. Until 1971 it was asked whether the person “speaks Gaelic and English” or “speaks Gaelic but not English” (Gaelic only). Due to the simple necessity to survive in an English dominated society and the considerable impact of the school system in fact all *Gàidhlig*-speaking people were forced to become bilingual – with the notable exceptions of pre-school children and very old people. **These “Gaelic only” persons did not, however, present those who had *Gàidhlig* as their natural and preferred language nor were they the only mother tongue speakers.** This was already highlighted after the census 1911 by comments given by the then registrar general and the superintendent of statistics in the county report on Inverness (Census Office, Scotland, 1912): „*When discussing the statistics of the Gaelic-speakers of Argyll we expressed an opinion that the reduction in the number of persons speaking Gaelic but unable to speak English should not be taken as a proof that the use of the language was being discontinued, and after making a similar study of statistics of the Gaelic-speakers of the islands of Inverness, we are in a position to repeat that opinion. One fact alone seems to justify such an expression, and that is that fully three-fourths of the children of less than school age, more than three but less than five, speak Gaelic exclusively. Such a condition seems possible only when Gaelic is the language habitually spoken in the homes, and this seems conclusive evidence of its wide and habitual use.*” Due to the ever increasing presence of English in the *Gàidhlig* community (mixed language marriages, in-migration of English only speakers, radio and television) more and more children under the age of 5 became bilingual and the census question proved to be irrelevant after the 2nd World War. Because of the very small numbers involved and the ambiguity of the question no census enumeration took place after 1971 on persons who spoke *Gàidhlig* but no English.
3. No data are available on persons speaking *Gàidhlig* outside Scotland in the rest of the United Kingdom. Census returns are, however, recorded in Canada where the *Gàidhlig* language survived as a community language in a few locations of the province of *Alba Nuadh* (Nova Scotia) well into the 1940s.
4. During World War II no census was taken. Therefore no figures are available for 1941.
5. In 1971 the wording was changed from “speaks Gaelic” into “is able to speak Gaelic”. This resulted in areas with low density of speakers in a substantial increase of *Gàidhlig*-speakers counted compared with 1961. These were essentially those who could speak *Gàidhlig* but did not have the opportunity to use it. In strongly *Gàidhlig*-speaking areas those who were able to speak *Gàidhlig* were also using the language. So in the islands and on the western seaboard the figures should have remained comparable with previous censuses.
6. In 1981 the population basis was changed from persons present on census night to usually resident persons. In the light of increased mobility of the population this change was inevitable.
7. From 1971 onwards additional questions were asked on the ability of people to read *Gàidhlig* or to write *Gàidhlig*.



8. In 2001 another question was introduced on the ability of a person to understand spoken *Gàidhlig*. This may have had an influence on some people with only a small command of the language to record themselves as being able to understand rather than able to speak the language. Without this choice some of them might have enlisted themselves or their children as *Gàidhlig*-speaking in order to be counted at all. This may explain the small decrease of speakers in the age group of 3 to 4 despite the strong efforts by the *cròileagan* movement in the preceding decade.
9. Additionally in 2001 for the first time all children under the age of 3 were recorded with their knowledge of *Gàidhlig*. In previous enumerations these children were not counted or (in 1891 and 1901) only a few children were enumerated in this age group. In many census publications percentages were calculated by using the enumerated *Gàidhlig*-speaking population (aged 3 years and over) on the basis of the total population. This led to slightly lower percentages than actually existed.
10. Census counts are not strictly exact. Apart from inevitable small enumeration errors the census authorities have introduced measures to keep returns anonymous. For example in 1971 figures in tables were rounded to the nearest 0 or 5. This fact represented a major obstacle in using small area statistics for further evaluation because of the small numbers involved. Comparable measures were taken in later censuses but with smaller overall “uncertainties” of +/- 1 in general.
11. All census material used and reproduced in this study is Crown Copyright. The use of this material in this study has been allowed under the licence no. C02W0003665.
12. Further information may be obtained by contacting the General Register Office for Scotland at <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk>.



IV. List of Census Output Areas with Numbers and Placenames

The following lists provides detailed information on all postcode names included in individual census output areas and shows the abbreviations/numbers defining output areas in census statistics between 1961 and 2001.

Census Output Areas in <i>Uibhist a Deas</i>				
Map No.	Census output area ³⁵	Area Codes		
		1961 1971	1981 1991	2001
01	<i>Eilean Eiriosgaidh</i> (Isle of Eriskay)	LB	56AB01A 56AB01B	60RJ000008
02	<i>Gearraidh na Monadh, Trosaraidh & Smeircleith</i>	LB	56AB02A	60RJ000009
03	<i>Taobh a'Chaolais, Cill Bhrighde, Pol a'Charra & Gleann Dail bho Dheas</i>	LB	56AB02B	60RJ000010
04	<i>Cille Pheadair, Ceann a Deas Loch Baghasdail & Gleann Dail bho Dheas</i>	LB	56AB03A	60RJ000011
05	<i>Baghasdail & An Leth Meadhonach</i>	LB	56AB03B	60RJ000012
06	<i>Loch Baghasdail</i> (Lochboisdale)	LB	56AB04	60RJ000197
07	<i>Ceann a Tuath Loch Baghasdail</i>	LB	56AB04	60RJ000198
08	<i>Dalabrog</i> (Daliburgh), <i>Gearraidh Sheilidh & Cros Dughail</i>	LB	56AB05A	60RJ000186
09	<i>Dalabrog</i> (Daliburgh)	LB	56AB05B	60RJ000013
10	<i>Aisgeirnis, Mingearraidh, Gearraidh Bhailteas & Frobost</i>	LB	56AB06B	60RJ000015
11	<i>Bornais, Taobh a Deas Loch Aineort, Cill Donnain</i> (Kildonan), <i>Taobh a Tuath Loch Aineort & Unasaraidh</i>	SU	56AB06A	60RJ000014
12	<i>Staoinebrig</i> (Stoneybridge) & <i>Ormacleit</i>	SU	56AB07A	60RJ000016
13	<i>Tobha Mòr</i> (Howmore), <i>Peighinn nan Aoireann, Suisèabhal & Tobha Beag</i>	SU	56AB07B	60RJ000017
14	<i>Geirinis</i> (Gerinish)	SU	56AB08	60RJ000018
15	<i>Stadhlaigearraidh</i> (Stilligarry), <i>Dreumasdal & Groigearaidh</i>	SU	56AB08	60RJ000019
16	<i>Aird Mhòr, Rubha Ghaisinis, Seileabhaig, Loch a'Charnain, Tholmair & Sanndabhaig</i>	SU	56AB09	60RJ000020
17	<i>Buaile Dubh & Carnan</i>	SU	56AB10A	60RJ000021
18	<i>Aird a'Mhachair, Aird na Monadh, Cill Amhlaidh, Lionacuidhe, Baile Gharbhaidh & Iochdar</i>	SU	56AB10B	60RJ000022

Table A-1: List of locations within individual census output areas and official numbers for different census dates for *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) – 1961-2001

³⁵ Placenames are given according to official information by the Ordnance Survey as they are used in modern maps. The place names in the Outer Hebrides do have officially *Gàidhlig* names and the „English“ versions are only used in addition for major settlements. Therefore the old anglicised names are provided for a few prominent locations only in tables A-1 and A-2.



Census Output Areas in <i>Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i>				
Map No.	Census output area	Area Codes		
		1961 1971	1981 1991	2001
51	<i>Creag a'Ghoraidh (Creagorry), Hacleit, Lionacleit & Aird Cumhang</i>	BB	56AK03A 56AK03B	60RJ000095
52	<i>Torlum</i>	BB	56AK04A	60RJ000096
53	<i>Lionacleit</i>	BB	56AK04A	60RJ000097
54	<i>Griminis, Creagastrom, Cill Eireabhagh, Aird Cumhang, Borgh, Cnoc na Monadh & Buaile Rairnis</i>	BB	56AK04B	60RJ000098
55	<i>Aird & Baile nan Cailleach</i>	BB	56AK05	60RJ000099
56	<i>Bail'a'Mhanaich (Balivanich)</i>	BB	56AK05	60RJ000100
57	<i>Bail'a'Mhanaich (Balivanich)</i>	BB	56AK08	60RJ000101
58	<i>Uachdar, Gramasdail, Dùn Gainmhich, Caolas Fhlodaigh, Eilean Fhlodaigh (Isle of Flodda)</i>	BB	56AK08	60RJ000180
59	<i>Bail'a'Mhanaich (Balivanich)</i>	BB	56AK06 56AK07 56AK11 56AK12	60RJ000215

Table A-2: List of locations within individual census output areas and official numbers for different census dates for *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (Benbecula) – 1961-2001



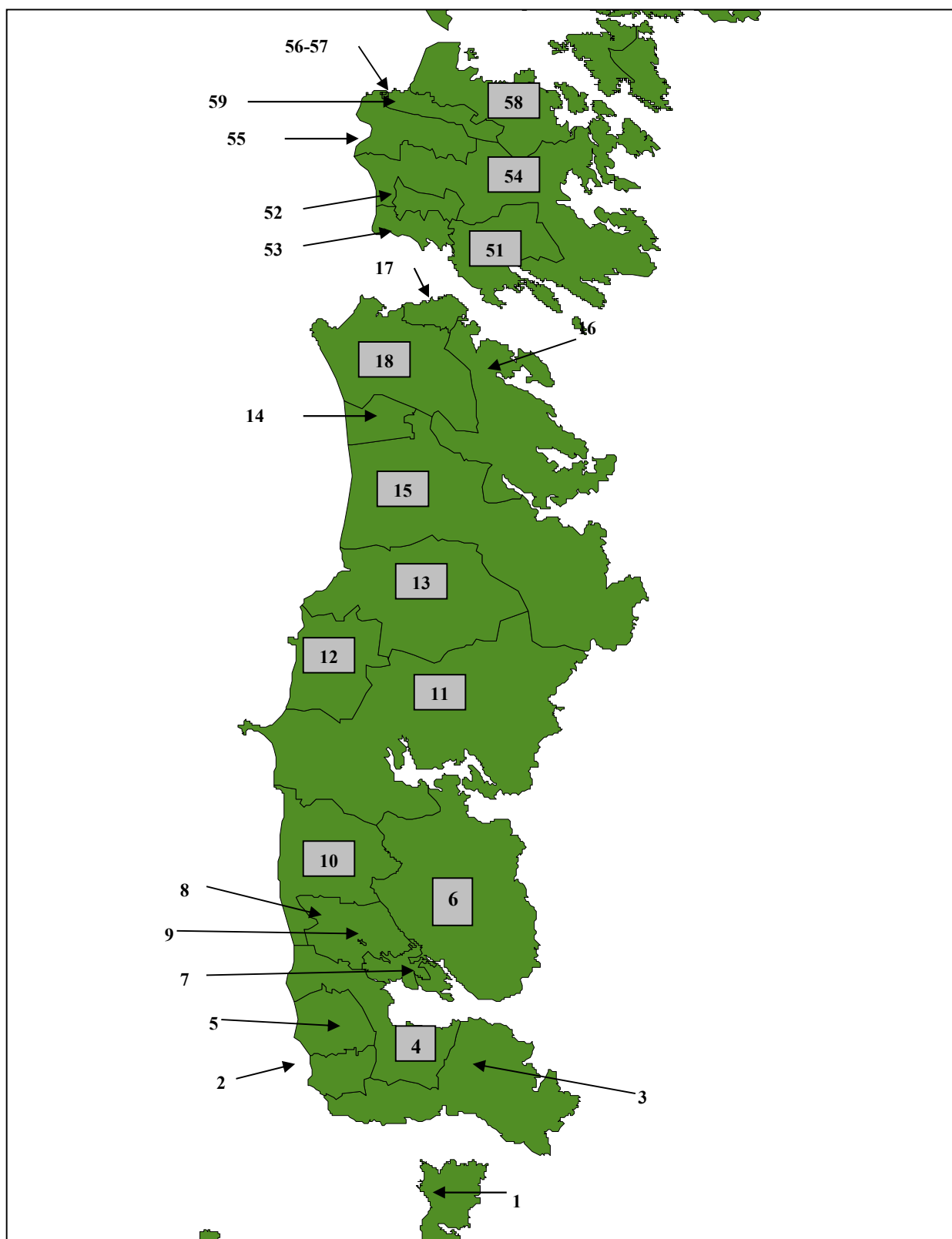


Fig. 15: Overview map of census output areas in *Uibhist a Deas* and *Beinn a'Bhaoghla* (numbers correspond to the map reference in tables A-1 and A-2)³⁶

³⁶ Digital boundaries courtesy of Ordnance Survey as part of the Geography Products provided by GROS for the 2001 census.



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VII. List of Abbreviations

There are a number of abbreviations used in the text which might not be known by every reader. Therefore, this short list intends to facilitate better understanding:

CCED	County council electoral division
CP	Civil parish
CNSA	<i>Comhairle nan Sgoiltean Araich</i> : Gaelic playgroup association
<i>Comhairle nan Eilean</i> (CNE) – later: <i>Comhairle nan Eilean Siar</i> (CNES)	Official name of the Western Isles Council, the local government body of the Outer Hebrides (with abbreviations)
<i>Cròileagan</i>	Gaelic speaking playgroup
Fèis	Local art festival with normally some Gaelic courses
GLPS	„Gaelic Language for the Primary School”: Course as introduction of Gaelic as second language
GME	<i>Gàidhlig</i> -medium education
GMU	<i>Gàidhlig</i> -medium unit: Class(es) with <i>Gàidhlig</i> -medium education but as part of an English medium school
GROS	General Register Office for Scotland
LVI	Language viability indicator
LCI	Language community indicator
<i>Mòd</i>	Gaelic language gathering (conversation, song and music) comparable to the Welsh Eisteddfod
n/a	Information is not available
OA	(Census) output area: the smallest enumeration unit on which census data are available
P1	Primary school year 1
P2	Primary school year 2
S1	Secondary school year 1
S2	Secondary school year 2
<i>Sgoil Araich</i>	Gaelic speaking nursery school
<i>Sràdagan</i>	Gaelic speaking clubs for primary school children



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