

Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Studies¹

Vol. 08: *Eilean Leòdhais: Uig & Carlabhagh* (Isle of Lewis: Uig & Carloway)

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Extended² 2nd Edition

March 2024

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 parish of Uig (including the settlements of Breascleit and Carloway as well as the island of Great Bernera) lies in the centre of the Gaelic heartland. The investigations within this volume conclude that even today some of the strongest Gaelic language communities in Scotland survive in this part of Lewis. Language viability is almost accomplished through the added effects of effective intergenerational language transmission and Gaelic-medium education which reaches most primary school children. However, even these positive developments could not totally counterbalance the impact of incoming monolingual English speakers which caused the decrease in the proportion of Gaelic-speakers since 1991. Accordingly additional efforts have to be undertaken to ensure that Uig remains at the heart of the Gaelic revival.

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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, too – 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

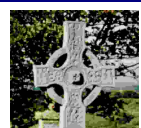
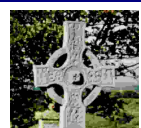


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1 Introduction

The parish of *Uig* encompasses almost a quarter of the landmass of *Leòdhas* (Lewis). This south-western island district is profoundly rural in character and includes the small island of *Beàrnaraigh* (Great Bernera). The approximately 1,500 inhabitants are overwhelmingly Protestants. As in other communities of the Outer Hebrides the islanders are normally occupied with the usual “traditional” industries like crofting, inshore fisheries, fish farming, public services and tourism. In recent years diversification attempts have been successful with the establishment of small industrial estates at *Breascleit* as well as *Carlabhagh*. Like the remainder of *Leòdhas* the area was administered until 1975 as part of the County of Ross & Cromarty and joined *Comhairle nan Eilean Siar* in the following years.

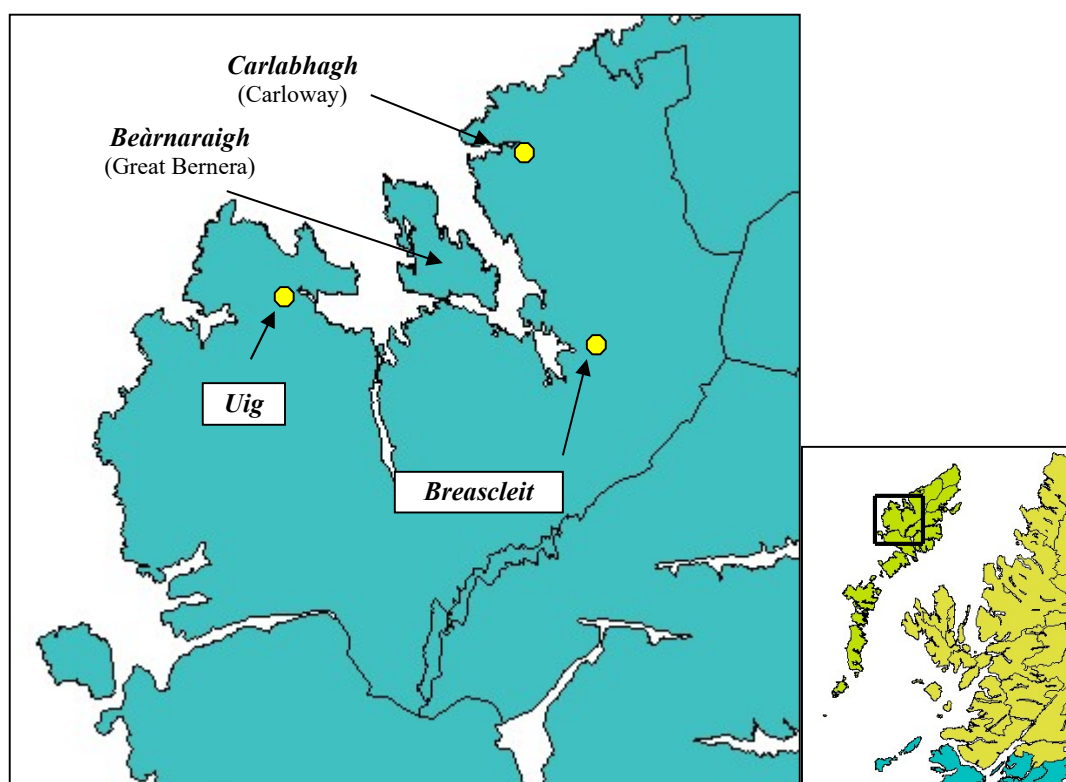


Fig. 1: Overview map of area under investigation³

The parish of *Uig* was generally considered to be a very important stronghold of *Gàidhlig* in the island. In recent years *Gàidhlig*-medium education was introduced very successfully in local schools with a vast majority of pupils attending this kind of primary school tuition.

With this background in mind the following short chapters will investigate the historical development of the use of *Gàidhlig* in the area 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.

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



2 The Historical Background

The population of *Leòdhas* as a whole maintained *Gàidhlig* as predominant community language until the end of the 20th century. In fig. 2 the census results regarding *Gàidhlig*-speaking intensity are compared between the west coast parish of *Uig* and its easterly neighbour of *Na Lochan* (Lochs) between 1881 and 2001. The latter parish was dealt with in detail in Vol. 07 of this series.

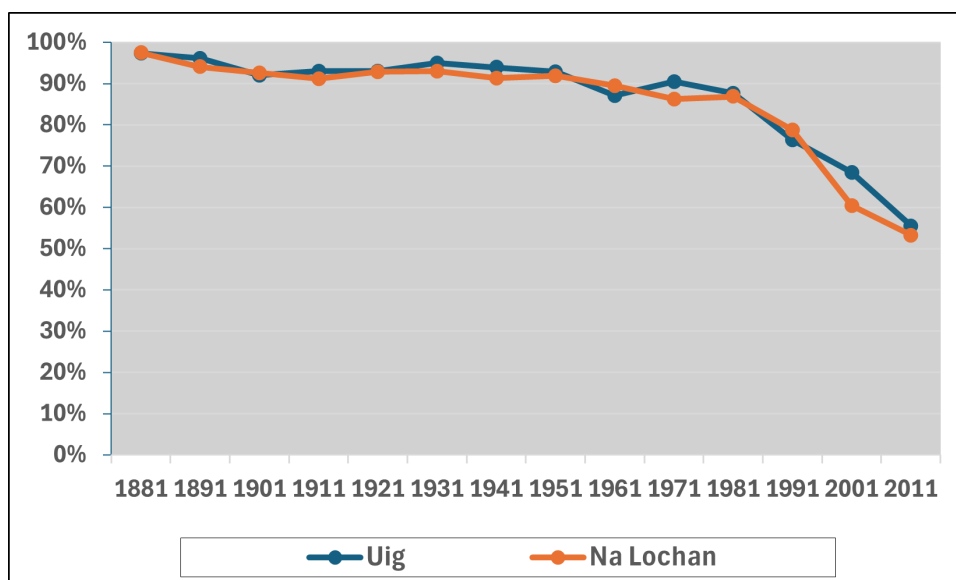


Fig. 2: *Gàidhlig*-speakers (3 years and over) as percentage of total population between 1881 and 2011 – civil parishes of *Uig* and neighbouring *Na Lochan* (Lochs)⁴

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

Gàidhlig-speaking was practically universal in the parish of *Uig* during the whole period between 1881 and 1931 (table 1). The incidence of “English only” remained substantially smaller than the proportion of the population recorded as speaking “Gaelic but no English”. In 1891 almost half of the enumerated persons were even returned as speaking only *Gàidhlig* (fig. 3). This fact was also evident on the small island of *Beàrnaraigh* (Great Bernera). Local details are provided in table 2 for enumeration districts.

<i>Uig & Carlabhagh</i>						
Subject \ Census	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931
<i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers (3 years +)	5,137 ⁵	4,428	4,137	4,152	3,681	3,195
% of total population	97.2 %	95.8 %	92.0 %	93.1 %	93.0 %	95.0 %

Table 1: Number of *Gàidhlig*-speakers (3 years and over) in *Uig & Carlabhagh* (*Uig & Carloway*) and percentage of total population speaking *Gàidhlig* during 1881-1931

The pre-school age group of 3 to 4 showed no significant reduction of “Gaelic only” incidence in all censuses before World War I. Table 12 certifies this for the whole island of *Leòdhas* (Scotland Census Office, 1932). The associated percentages in 1891 (78.6 %) and 1911 (73.9 %) are proof of this fact. After the war anglicisation tendencies in *Steòrnabhagh* (Stornoway) reduced the share of pre-school children with no English to 66.0 % in 1931. Nonetheless overall percentages of *Gàidhlig*-speakers in the parish of *Uig* remained remarkably stable.

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

⁵ These figures include returns from the district of *Siabost* (Shawbost) which was transferred from the parish of *Uig* to neighbouring *Barabhas* (Barvas) in 1891.



Number of persons and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in districts of Uig & Carlabhagh – 1881 - 1911							
Area ⁶	All persons speaking Gàidhlig ⁷				Monolingual share of all Gàidhlig-speakers ⁸		
	1881	1891	1901	1911	1891	1901	1911
<i>Bhaltos & Rìf</i> (Valtos & Reef)	547 98.6 %	394 96.8 %	297 92.0 %	311 93.7%	163 41.4 %	99 33.3 %	77 24.8%
<i>Cliobh, Cnìp & Na h-Uigean</i> (Cliff, Kneep & Uigin)	1,290 97.1 %	183 97.3 %	207 92.0 %	261 92.9%	91 49.7 %	98 47.3 %	83 31.8%
<i>Brèinis & Ìslibhig</i> (Brenish & Islivig)	326 97.6%	282 92.8 %	274 94.8 %	243 96.4%	74 26.2 %	76 27.7 %	92 37.9%
<i>Aird Uig & Tuimisgearraidh</i> (Aird Uig & Timsgarry)	280 96.6%	341 95.0 %	255 93.4 %	254 94.8%	165 48.4 %	45 17.6 %	47 18.5%
<i>Geiseadar, Cairisiadar & Einacleit</i> (Geshader, Carishader & Enacleite)	287 98.0%	305 97.8 %	265 94.3 %	252 94.4%	164 53.8 %	110 41.5 %	108 42.9%
<i>Iarsiadar, Lundal & Crùlabhaig</i> (Ershader, Lundale & Crulavig)	115 100%	113 100 %	162 92.0 %	152 91.6%	82 72.6 %	36 22.2 %	31 20.4%
<i>Morsgail & Giosla</i> (Morsgail & Gisla)	59 92.2%	52 88.1 %	52 81.3 %	28 93.3%	12 23.1 %	16 30.8 %	16 57.1%
<i>Bearnaraigh: Breacleit & Tacleit</i> (Great Bernera: Breacleite & Hacklet)	383 99.7 %	338 95.5 %	378 96.2 %	500 94.2%	139 41.1 %	101 26.7 %	122 24.4%
<i>Bearnaraigh: Tòpsann & Bhàlasaigh</i> (Great Bernera: Tobson & Valasay)	209 98.6%	175 96.7 %	183 97.9 %	181 91.0%	131 74.9 %	53 29.0 %	48 26.5%
<i>Loch a' Ghaimhich</i> (Lochganvich)	53 98.1 %	36 87.8 %	34 97.1 %	24 100%	15 41.7 %	23 67.6 %	7 29.2%
<i>Breascleith</i> (Breasclete)	343 97.4 %	358 95.7 %	376 93.3 %	351 92.1%	203 56.7 %	125 33.2 %	101 28.8%
<i>Gearraidh na h-Aibhne & Pairc Bhr.</i> (Garynahine & Breasclete Park)	332 97.1 %	61 95.3 %	47 97.9 %	45 95.7%	25 41.0 %	9 19.1 %	2 4.4%
<i>Calanais</i> (Callanish)		301 96.8 %	267 97.4 %	249 97.6%	185 61.5 %	85 31.8 %	56 22.5%
<i>Tolastadh a' Chaolais & Dùn Charl.</i> (Tolsta Chaolais & Doune Carloway)	462 95.3%	452 99.6 %	418 93.9 %	349 90.2%	139 30.8 %	126 30.1 %	94 26.9%
<i>Ciribhig & Cnoc Charlabhaigh</i> (Kirkivick & Knock Carloway)	396 94.5%	386 91.9 %	356 81.5 %	391 92.0%	171 44.3 %	101 28.4 %	73 18.7%
<i>Na Gearrannan</i> (Garenin)	220 97.8%	208 94.4 %	202 98.5 %	198 93.4%	176 84.6 %	125 61.9 %	75 37.9%
<i>Carlabhagh</i> (Carloway)	303 95.9 %	306 95.3 %	373 91.2 %	363 93.3%	242 79.1 %	150 40.2 %	115 31.7%

Table 2: Number of persons speaking Gàidhlig and all Gàidhlig-speakers as share of population in Uig & Carlabhagh according to local census data from 1881 to 1911

⁶ Enumeration division or village.

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.



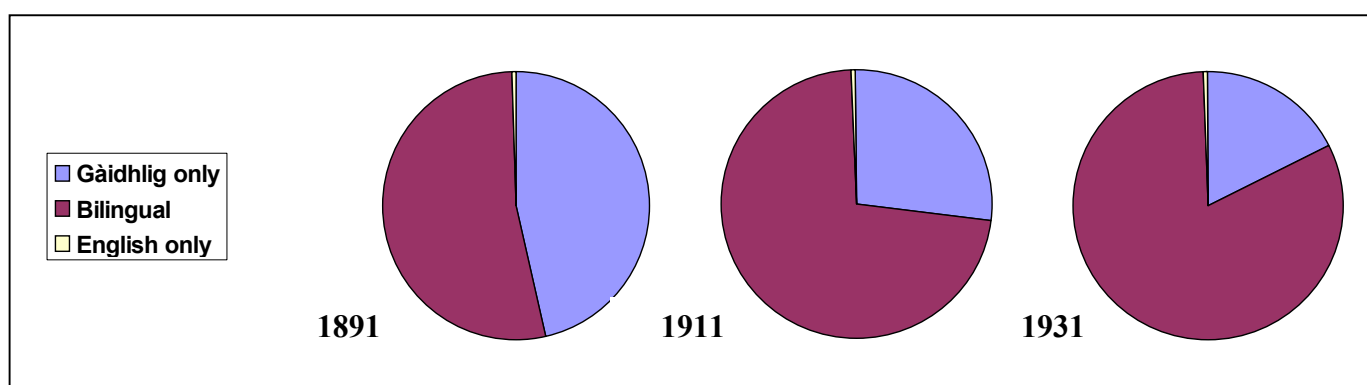


Fig. 3: Share of population speaking Gàidhlig and/or English in the study area according to census results in 1891, 1911 and 1931

In the late 1930s Carl Borgstrøm spent two months on *Beàrnaraigh* during his linguistic study on the dialects of the Outer Hebrides. His remarks were also valid for the whole parish and essentially for all rural parts of *Leòdhas*: “In all these islands Gaelic is the language of the native population, but the knowledge of English has been so widely diffused through the schools and through intercourse with foreigners that only a very small percentage of the people are monoglot Gaelic speakers; almost all such are sought among the very old people or among the children who have not yet come to school. The number of those who can read and write their mother tongue is now increasing, since Gaelic is being taught at school (the author: as second language with English as medium of instruction). In the Protestant parts Gaelic holds an important position as the language of the Church; here the sermon is preached, the prayers are said and the Psalms are sung in Gaelic; even many older people who got no Gaelic Instruction in school in their days, are able to read the Bible in Gaelic” (Borgstrøm, 1940). Cracks in the dominance of Gàidhlig as everyday language were to occur later.

2.2 More Recent Developments (Census 1951–2011)

The population of *Uig* decreased substantially during the decades after World War II. The economic difficulties lead to a significant out-migration of people. But many “exiles” kept their links to the community although they had to work on the mainland to earn a living. In 1971 the total population stayed at around 60 % of the figure enumerated in 1931. The incidence of Gàidhlig-speaking, however, remained very high until 1981 at least (table 3). In 1961 there was a small decrease in language intensity in the western part of the parish (see also table 13) but this was due to the presence of military personnel.

<i>Uig & Carlabhagh</i>							
Subject \ Census	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
<i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers (3 years +)	2,525	2,116	1,765	1,557	1,267	1,046	873
Percentage of total population	92.9 %	87.1 %	90.5 %	87.7 %	76.4 %	68.5 %	55.7 %

Table 3: Number of Gàidhlig-speakers (3 years and over) in *Uig & Carlabhagh* (*Uig & Carloway*) and percentage of total population speaking Gàidhlig during 1951-2011

The report on Gàidhlig-speaking schoolchildren in Highland schools (Scottish Council for Research in Education, 1961) mentioned the school district of *Uig* still as being a stronghold of the language: 286 of 299 primary school children were first or preferred language speakers (95.7 %) in the school year 1957/58. The Ross & Cromarty Education Scheme started in the 1960s shortly after its predecessor in Inverness-shire (see Vol. 03 of this series) and especially encouraged the use of Gàidhlig as medium of instruction for mother tongue speakers in places such as *Uig*.



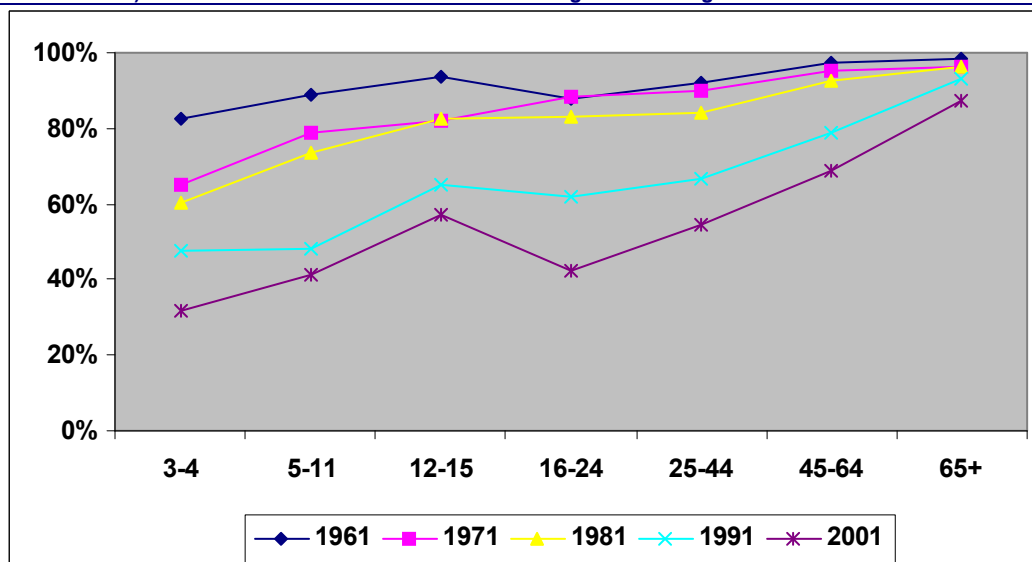


Fig. 4: Percentage of population speaking Gàidhlig in different age groups between 1961 and 2001: Rural parts of Eilean Leòdhais (excluding town of Steòrnabhagh)

A very rare possibility to look at the inter-generational distribution of the Gàidhlig-speaking population between 1961 and 2001 provides fig. 4 which shows the general trend in rural *Leòdhais* (excluding the town of *Steòrnabhagh*). The decrease in the age groups 3-15 was only halted temporarily between 1971 and 1981 which may have been the result of the Bilingual Project (1975-1981) described in detail in Vol. 02 of this series (Murray & Morrison, 1984). Until 1981 the overall percentages of Gàidhlig-speakers remained more or less the same. In 1981 all census output areas in the area showed over 80 % Gàidhlig-speaking intensities with maximum values around *Gearrannan*, *Tolastaidh Chaolais* and *Uig* at around 95 % (table 14). In all subsequent censuses until 2001 the 5-24 age group showed higher percentages than the generation aged 25 to 44 (fig.5) pointing to a rather successful educational provision in the parish of *Uig*.

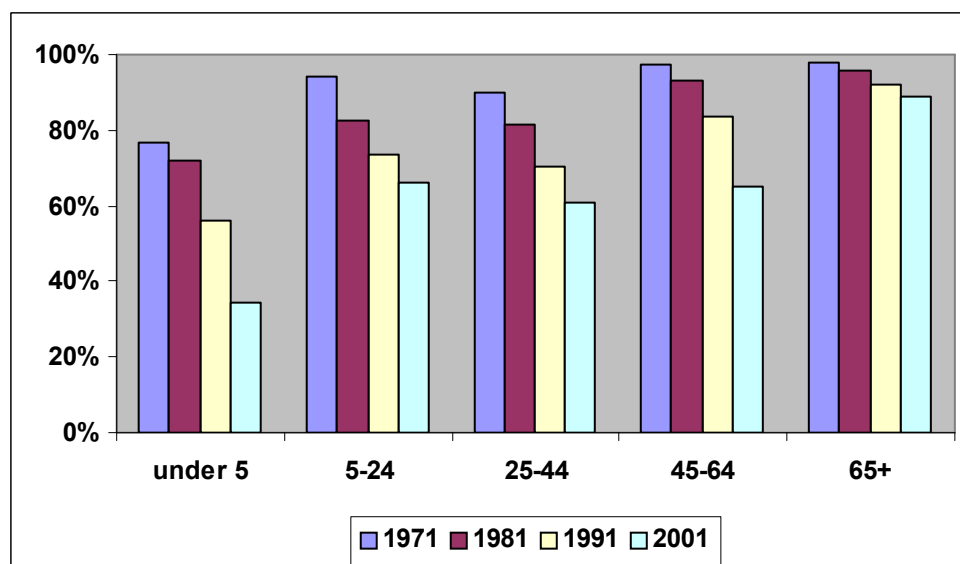


Fig. 5: Percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in different age groups between 1971 and 2001 – Area of Uig & Carlabhagh (Uig & Carloway)⁹

⁹ Under 5: Gàidhlig abilities in the age group 3-4 until 1991, in 2001 in all age groups 0-4.



Contrary to the relative reluctance of parents in other parts of the island the concept of Gàidhlig-medium education was embraced overwhelmingly in the area. In 1986 four primary school entrants became the first GME pupils in the Outer Hebrides when they entered *Breascleit* primary school. Similar provision in *Carlabhagh* (1992), *Uig* (1993) and *Beàrnaraigh* (1995) followed suit. In addition, *Breascleit*, *Carlabhagh* and *Uig* schools were even designated official “Gaelic schools” in 1998 by *Comhairle nan Eilean*¹⁰. The vast majority of pupils there went into GME and only a few children attended the so-called “mainstream” i.e. essentially English-medium classes. *Sradagan* were established in *Breascleit* and *Carlabhagh* and *cròileagan* (playgroups) or *sgoiltean araich* (nursery schools) were set up in *Uig*, *Beàrnaraigh*, *Breascleit* and *Carlabhagh*.

As already mentioned the vast majority of primary school children in this part of *Leòdhas* went through GME during the 1990s. A study on the attainment of pupils receiving Gàidhlig-medium primary education in Scotland (Johnstone et al., 1999) underlined the overall positive performance of children in such a bilingual setting: ... “Gaelic-medium pupils were not at a disadvantage when compared with pupils educated through English in the same schools or with the national average. ... In many though not all instances they outperformed English-medium pupils and in addition gained the advantage of having become proficient in two languages.” At the time of the study there were 51 primary schools in Scotland in which pupils received GME, mainly in the areas of *Comhairle nan Eilean Siar* (Western Isles Council) and Highland Council. This included of course all four primary schools in *Uig*. The research was intended to describe both the outcomes of pupils’ primary school education and also their progress in earlier years towards these outcomes. Especially when comparing the relatively high speaking abilities in younger age groups in this area with other remaining “strongholds” of Gàidhlig it is quite obvious that the Gàidhlig-medium approach was more successful than the official “bilingual” policy in the remaining classrooms. This fact becomes even more evident when realising that the only comparatively positive example, the island of *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist), was the second area in *Na h-Eileanan an Iar* where the majority of children entered primary school education via GME around 2001. Developments since 2001 were still encouraging although the attendance of GME slightly decreased (fig. 9). However, the provision of Gàidhlig-medium day nurseries attached to all primary schools was encouraging. In the school year 2003/2004 12 children were enrolled at the age of 3 or 4.

The census of 2011 unfortunately saw a very substantial decrease of Gàidhlig speaking in the area (table 3). This was especially apparent in the western, more remote parts of the parish. There the only GMU at *Uig* had closed in 2008. In 2010/11 the total Gàidhlig medium roll in the parish amounted to just 28 pupils, that is 33,3 % of the total. Maybe this fact explains some of the census results in 2011. The total population, however, rose since 2001 from 1.527 to 1.595. 1.216 inhabitants were born in Scotland (84.0 %) compared with 1.315 (76.2 %) ten years before. Accordingly, the percentage of Gàidhlig speakers based on the total population may be an underestimate when thinking of a “local” community.

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 selected local data zones. The intergenerational viability of these selected census data zones shows positive tendencies in the areas around *Carlabhagh*, but very low values in other places.

¹⁰ This designation was limited to five schools in the islands; the remaining “Gaelic schools” were situated in *Lional* at the north end of *Leòdhas* (Lewis) and *Staoinebrìg* in *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist).



A new feature in the 2011 census was a question about the language (other than English) used at home. This saw in this area roughly three quarters of *Gàidhlig* speakers living in households where the language was used. This information is also provided in table 4.

Census Data Zones	Uig & Carlabhagh – Census 2011					Gàidhlig as home language (% of speakers)
	Knowledge of Gàidhlig					
	Young age (3-15)		All ages		Difference (Language viability indicator)	
Uig & Breascleit (Uig & Breasclete)	48	53.3%	460	60.5%	- 7.2 %	79.8 %
Carlabhagh (Carloway)	38	70.4%	323	66.7%	+ 3.7 %	86.3 %
In comparison: 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

2.3 Development of literacy in *Gàidhlig* between 1971 and 2011

Information about literacy in the language became available from 1971 onwards: Census questions were introduced on the ability to read or write *Gàidhlig* (see tables 4 and 5 below). Like in other Protestant parts of the Hebrides reading and writing ability in *Uig* is very high with values of over 80 % and 60 % respectively. This was true for all generations (fig. 6) even in 1971 apart from primary school age. But the Bilingual Project and later on the provision of GME raised also the percentage of *Gàidhlig*-readers in this generation to over 80 % in 2001.

	Number of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers with ability to read <i>Gàidhlig</i>					Percentage of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers with ability to read <i>Gàidhlig</i>				
	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Uig & Carlabhagh (Uig & Carloway)	1485	1341	1044	851	655	85.1%	86.1%	82.3%	80.8%	75.3%

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

	Number of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers with ability to write <i>Gàidhlig</i>					Percentage of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers with ability to write <i>Gàidhlig</i>				
	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Uig & Carlabhagh (Uig & Carloway)	815	962	742	656	515	46.7%	61.8%	58.5%	62.3%	59.2%

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



In 2011 a slight decline of *Gàidhlig* literacy was observed for all areas (tables 5 and 6)

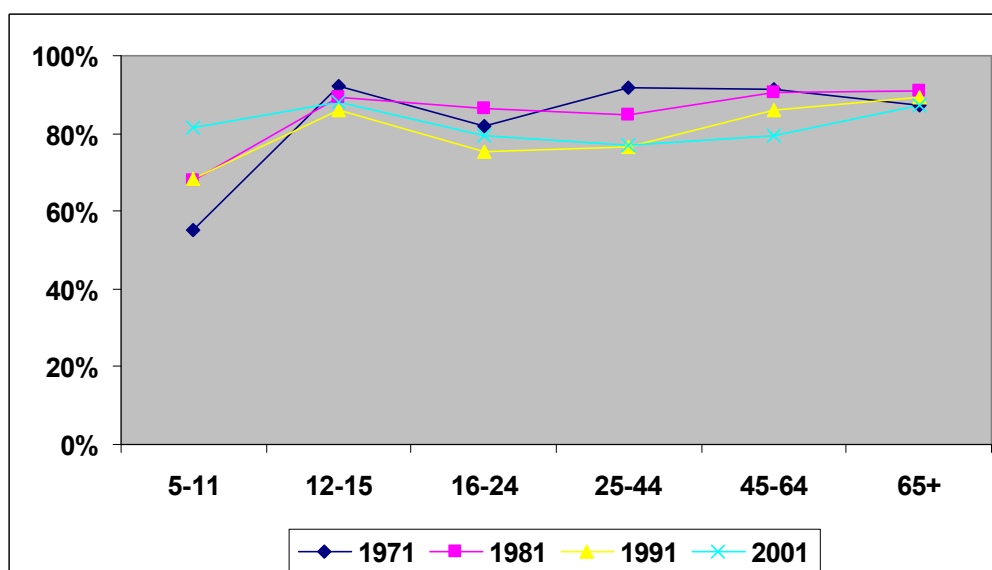


Fig. 6: Persons able to read *Gàidhlig* as a percentage of *Gàidhlig*-speakers in different age groups (1971-2001)



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 will describe generally the distribution of language abilities (inter-generational and community by community) and the specific conditions of the younger age groups in local primary school catchments.

3.1 General overview: *Gàidhlig* language capabilities in 2001

The ability of speaking or understanding spoken *Gàidhlig* was still recorded by the vast majority of inhabitants of *Uig* in 2001. In general, the following conclusions may be drawn from the 2001 census information (special consideration of educational aspects are dealt with in section 3.2 concerning school catchments):

- The *Gàidhlig* language abilities (fig. 7) were found to be higher in school aged generations than in the working age population. Roughly half of the pre-school children at least understood the language.
- There had been a general decrease in *Gàidhlig*-speaking percentage since 1991 with the notable exception of school children due to the influence of GME. In addition, language maintenance was positive for those understanding spoken *Gàidhlig* when comparing the percentages for those aged between 3 and 24 (78.2 %) and those for all ages (77.3 %).
- Results were not the same over the whole area (table 14). *Gàidhlig*-speaking intensity varied between *Breascleit* (73.9 %) and *Dail Beag* (60.7 %). All inhabitants lived in comparatively strong language communities where more than two thirds of the people knew *Gàidhlig* (fig. 8). Approximately a quarter of inhabitants were part of communities with more than 80 % knowing the language.
- Literacy in the language was widespread with over 80 % of speakers being able to read and over 60 % of speakers able to write the language.
- In the new category of children aged less than 3 years *Uig* showed an encouraging sign with 8 children able to speak *Gàidhlig* (26.7 %) and even 14 children understanding spoken *Gàidhlig* (46.7 %). The vast majority of those children (11) originated from the eastern parts of the parish around *Breascleit* and *Carlabhagh*.
- In addition to those 1,054 persons able to speak *Gàidhlig* (69.0 % of the population) 127 inhabitants (8.3 %) were at least able to understand, read or write the language.

Uig could accordingly be considered as the strongest and most viable *Gàidhlig* community in the whole of *Leòdhais* and indeed the whole of Scotland in 2001.



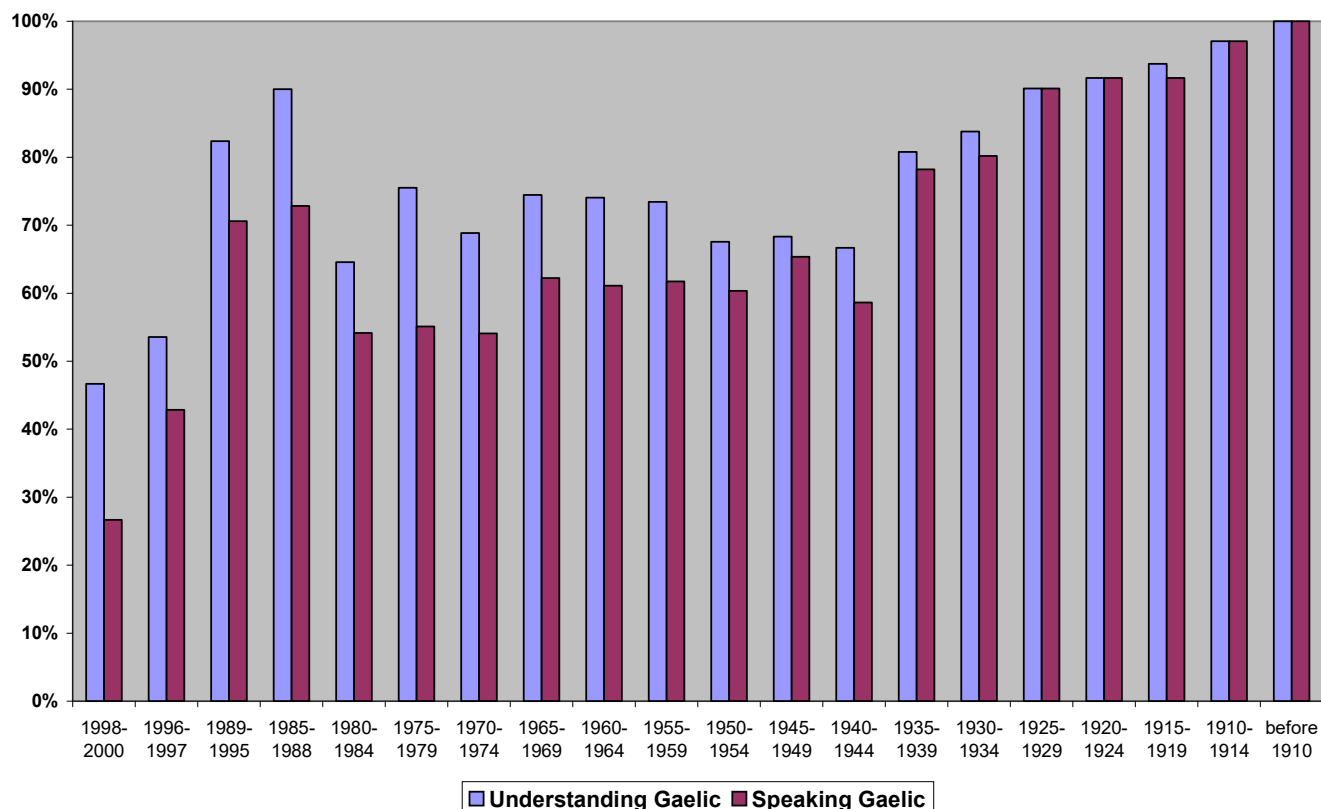


Fig. 7: Percentage of population able to understand or speak Gàidhlig and year of birth – area of Uig & Carlabhagh (Uig & Carloway) according to Census 2001

Age group	2001						1991		Diff. 2001 – 1991
	Knowing ¹¹ Gàidhlig		Able to speak & read Gàidhlig		Able to speak Gàidhlig		Able to speak Gàidhlig		
0-2	14	46.7 %	0	0.0 %	8	26.7 %	n/a	n/a	n/a
3-4	15	53.6 %	0	0.0 %	12	42.9 %	14	53.8 %	- 10.9 %
5-11	126	82.4 %	90	58.8 %	108	70.6 %	63	66.3 %	+ 4.3 %
12-15	63	90.0 %	45	64.3 %	51	72.9 %	58	70.7 %	+ 2.2 %
16-24	68	70.1 %	42	43.3 %	53	54.6 %	125	75.8 %	- 21.2 %
3-24	272	78.2 %	477	46.8 %	224	64.4 %	261	70.7 %	- 6.3 %
All ages	1,181	77.3 %	851	55.7 %	1,054	69.0 %	1,267	79.2 %	- 10.2 %
Difference	+ 0.9 %		- 8.9 %		- 4.6%		- 8.5 %		

Table 7: Knowledge of Gàidhlig in younger age groups in Uig & Carlabhagh (Uig & Carloway) in 2001 and 1991

¹¹ Persons able to understand spoken Gàidhlig and/or able to speak, read or write Gàidhlig.



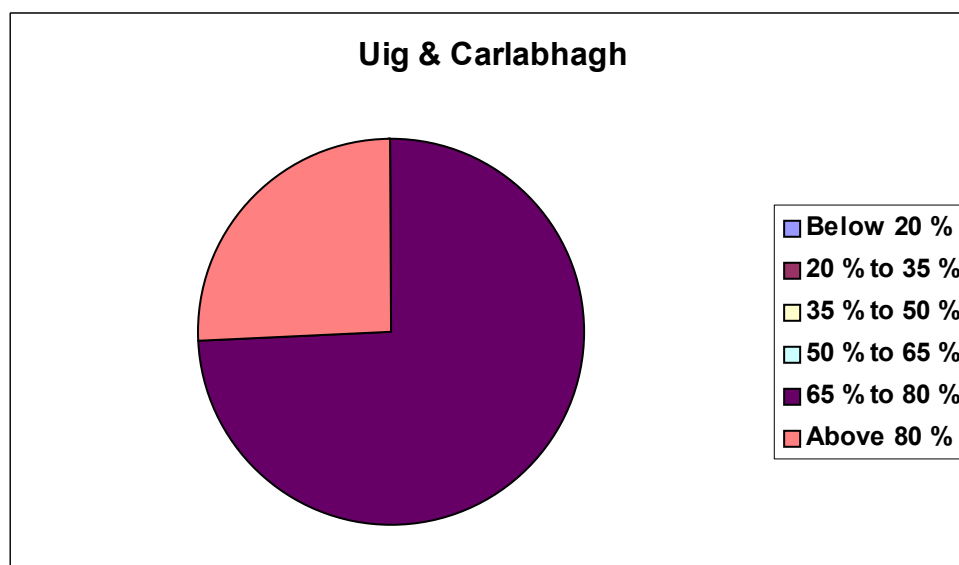


Fig. 8: Share of population living in neighbourhoods (census output areas) with different intensity of language knowledge in *Uig & Carlabhagh* (Uig & Carloway) according to Census 2001

3.2 Children with knowledge of Gàidhlig in primary school catchments

Aggregating the information of the small area statistics for the catchments areas of local primary schools provides an interesting avenue to investigate the influence of local authority and parental attitudes towards *Gàidhlig*. It is possible to calculate numbers and percentages for different age groups and for the purpose of this investigation they have been attributed to 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 7 with the age group of 24-35 which is meant to represent the language abilities of possible parents.

Knowledge of <i>Gàidhlig</i> (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>Uig</i> (Uig)	3	23.1 %	32	91.4 %	7	87.5 %	18	64.3 %
<i>Beàrnaraigh</i> (Great Bernera)	5	50.0 %	22	81.5 %	9	81.8 %	30	76.9 %
<i>Breascleit</i> (Breasclete)	10	71.4 %	39	83.0 %	26	96.3 %	34	70.8 %
<i>Carlabhagh</i> (Carloway)	11	52.4 %	33	75.0 %	21	87.5 %	27	75.0 %

Table 8: Number and percentage of persons with knowledge of *Gàidhlig* in selected age groups for primary school catchment areas according to the census 2001

Looking at the various age groups the following statements can be provided:

- Pre-school children: The intensity of *Gàidhlig*-speaking children was highest in the east of the area with *Breascleit* as main centre of activity. Although *cròileagan* were available for all children “only” every second child in *Uig* as a whole at least understood *Gàidhlig*. It has to



be concluded that even in such a comparatively strong language community the emergence of mother tongue *Gàidhlig*-speakers is becoming a rare feature.

- Primary school children: All primary schools in the area provided GME with considerable success: 93 primary school children in the 2000/2001 school year (out of 146 children) attended *Gàidhlig*-medium units, this means 63.7 %. The individual roles were distributed quite evenly amongst the schools of *Uig* (22), *Beàrnaraigh* (7), *Breascleit* (36) and *Carlabhagh* (28). The remaining third of pupils experienced “bilingual” mainstream education adding a few counts in the “able to speak *Gàidhlig*” category. The *sradagan* groups in *Breascleit* and *Carlabhagh* may have added also a few entrants to the total.
- Secondary school children: In secondary stages S1 and S2 pupils either went to the junior secondary department of nearby *Siabost* (Shawbost) or to the Nicolson Institute in *Steòrnabhagh*. The overall knowledge of *Gàidhlig* was especially high in this age category because all pupils had to learn *Gàidhlig* whether categorised as “fluent speakers” or “learners”.
- Parents: The vast majority of parents at least understood spoken *Gàidhlig*. This, however, was not matched entirely with the share of pre-school children knowing some of the language. The school catchment of *Breascleit* was the only notable positive exception.

Educational efforts in this part of *Leòdhas* have been very intensive and they do show some encouraging signs but there is still a long way to go towards achieving the level of former strength of *Gàidhlig*.



4 Future Perspectives – 2011 and beyond

The 2011 census results can also be used to predict future developments because major underlying facts cannot be changed within a time span of a few years. The value of the language viability indicator (LVI¹²) did show overall a negative value of around – 3% in 2011 (table 9).

Area	Uig & Carlabhagh – Census 2011					Gàidhlig as home language (% of speakers)
	Knowledge of Gàidhlig					
	Young age (3-15)		All ages		Difference (Language viability indicator)	
Uig & Carlabhagh (Uig & Carloway)	86	59.7%	783	62.9%	- 3.2 %	82.6 %
In comparison: Na h- Eileanan an Iar (Western Isles)	48.8 %		61.2 %		- 12.4 %	76.8 %

Table 9: Intergenerational viability and Gàidhlig as home language in Uig & Carlabhagh (Uig & Carloway) in comparison with the whole Na h-Eileanan an Iar (Western Isles) according to census data of 2011

However, more recent developments on the educational front provide hope for the survival of the Gàidhlig language in this part Leòdhais (Lewis): The overall temporal evolution of Gàidhlig-medium primary education is depicted in fig. 9 for the period 1992-2023. For example, in the 2022-23 session 22 pupils (91.7 %) attended the GMU in Uig and 18 pupils (100 %) were recorded in the Breascleit GMU – very positive numbers indeed!

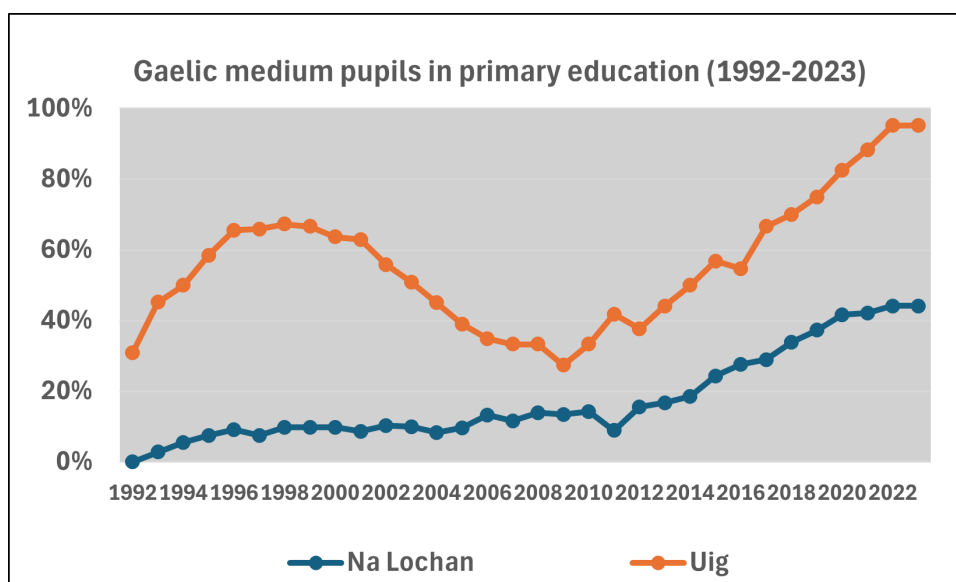


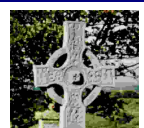
Fig. 9: Share of primary school children attending Gàidhlig-medium classes in Na Lochan and Uig (September 1992 – September 2023)¹³

¹² 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.

¹³ Gaelic Dept, University of Strathclyde.



In conclusion: This part of *Leòdhas* consists of some of the strongest *Gàidhlig*-speaking communities in Scotland. Language viability may be accomplished through the added effects of effective intergenerational language transmission and GME which reaches the vast majority of primary school children. Even these positive developments, however, could not totally counterbalance the numbers of incoming monolingual English speakers causing the decrease in the proportion of *Gàidhlig*-speakers since 1991.



I. Supplementary Tables

Gaelic and Gaelic only between 1881 and 1901: <i>Uig & Carlabhagh</i>	Total Popula- tion	<i>Gàidhlig</i> and Eng- lish	<i>Gàidhlig</i> but no English
Census/Selected Area			
1881 (Speaking “habitually” Gaelic)	5,284	5,137	
----- Inhabited islands (included in the above) ---			
<i>Beàrnaraigh</i> (Great Bernera)	596	592	
<i>Pabaigh</i> (Pabay)	9	-	
----- Villages (included in the above) –			
<i>Bhaltos</i> (Valtos)	332	326	
<i>Breascleith</i> (Breasclete)	352	343	
<i>Carlabhagh</i> (Carloway)	316	303	
----- Census registration districts (included in the above) –			
<i>Uig</i> (Uig)	2,256	2,208	
<i>Carlabhagh</i> (Carloway)	2,974	2,876	
1891	4,621	2,192	2,236
----- Inhabited islands (included in the above) ---			
<i>Beàrnaraigh</i> (Great Bernera)	535	243	270
<i>Orasaigh</i> (Orensay)	2	1	1
----- Villages (included in the above) –			
<i>Bhaltos</i> (Valtos)	407	231	163
<i>Breascleith</i> (Breasclete)	374	155	203
<i>Calanaish</i> (Callanish)	311	116	185
<i>Carlabhagh</i> (Carloway)	321	64	242
----- Census registration districts (included in the above) –			
<i>Uig</i> (Uig)	2,416	1,240	1,074
<i>Carlabhagh</i> (Carloway)	2,959	1,399	1,406
1901	4,487	2,768	1,367
----- Inhabited islands (included in the above) ---			
<i>Beàrnaraigh</i> (Great Bernera)	580	397	154
<i>Na h-Eileanan Flannach</i> (Flannan Island Lighthouse)	4	2	-
----- Villages (included in the above) –			
<i>Bhaltos</i> (Valtos)	323	198	99
<i>Breascleith</i> (Breasclete)	403	251	125
<i>Carlabhagh</i> (Carloway)	443	223	150
----- Census registration districts (included in the above) –			
<i>Uig</i> (Uig)	2,207	1,435	635
<i>Carlabhagh</i> (Carloway)	3,076	1,863	1,088
----- Electoral areas (included in the above) –			
<i>Uig an Ear</i> (Uig East)	2,256	1,339	732
<i>Uig an Iar</i> (Uig West)	2,207	1,429	635

Table 10: Number of persons speaking *Gàidhlig* between 1881 and 1901 – selected areas (civil parish, electoral areas, villages or inhabited islands) in *Uig & Carlabhagh*



Gaelic and Gaelic only between 1911 and 1971: <i>Uig & Carlabhagh</i>	Total Popula- tion	<i>Gàidhlig</i> and Eng- lish	<i>Gàidhlig</i> but no English
Census/Selected Area			
1911 <i>Uig</i> (Uig) CP	4,462	3,029	1,123
1921 <i>Uig</i> (Uig) CP	3,956	2,988	693
1931 <i>Uig</i> (Uig) CP	3,364	2,624	571
1951 <i>Uig</i> (Uig) CP	2,718	2,417	108
1961 ----- County council electoral divisions (included in the above) –	2,430	2,064	52
<i>Uig an Iar</i> (Uig West) CCED	1,225	971	23
<i>Uig an Ear</i> (Uig East) CCED	1,205	1,093	29
1971 ¹⁴ ----- County council electoral divisions (included in the above) –	1,947	1,745	20
<i>Uig an Iar</i> (Uig West) CCED	900	810	*
<i>Uig an Ear</i> (Uig East) CCED	1,050	935	*

Table 11: Number of persons speaking *Gàidhlig* between 1901 and 1971 – selected areas (civil parish, county council electoral divisions) in *Uig & Carlabhagh*

District Council of <i>Leòdhas</i> (Census 1961)					
Age	Population	Speaking <i>Gàidhlig</i> only		Speaking both <i>Gàidhlig</i> and English	
3-4	488	203	41.6 %	203	41.6 %
5 – 9	1,252	37	3.0 %	1,079	86.2 %
10 – 14	1,554	-	-	1,451	93.4 %
15 – 24	1,579	3	0.2 %	1,384	87.7 %
25 – 44	3,461	15	0.4 %	3,176	91.8 %
45 – 64	4,776	18	0.4 %	4,618	96.7 %
65 and over	2,867	139	4.8 %	2,682	93.5 %
3 and over	15,977	415	2.6 %	14,593	91.3 %

Table 12: Number of persons speaking *Gàidhlig* for the area of the former Lewis District Council in 1961 – results are exclusive of returns from the Small Burgh of Stornoway

¹⁴ Due to rounding of figures to the nearest 0 and 5 it is impossible to provide exact “Gaelic only” numbers in 1971. The figures in the table should be read as “between 1,721 and 1,749” and “between 14 and 26” respectively.



Percentage of population speaking Gàidhlig but no English in island parishes of former Ross & Cromarty ¹⁵					
Age group	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931
3-4	74.4 %	73.2 %	76.8 %	65.5 %	63.0 %
5-9	56.1 %	44.5 %	43.8 %	24.6 %	16.7 %
10-14	32.5 %	17.4 %	9.2 %	3.6 %	1.6 %
15-19	34.4 %	11.8 %	4.6 %	0.8 %	0.4 %
20-24	38.1 %	15.0 %	4.2 %	0.8 %	0.5 %
25-29	46.6 %	17.7 %	5.7 %	1.3 %	0.8 %
30-34	48.9 %	24.4 %	11.8 %	2.0 %	1.3 %
35-39	49.4 %	33.8 %	16.1 %	3.4 %	1.3 %
40-44	57.2 %	39.8 %	25.9 %	5.7 %	2.5 %
45-49	61.0 %	38.2 %	34.2 %	11.1 %	3.8 %
50-54	68.2 %	50.5 %	40.8 %	17.1 %	8.3 %
55-59	65.7 %	52.9 %	41.4 %	26.8 %	14.0 %
60-64	73.9 %	61.5 %	51.9 %	35.3 %	23.6 %
65-69	71.8 %	65.3 %	57.7 %	37.9 %	34.9 %
70-74	72.1 %	67.2 %	66.3 %	51.9 %	43.5 %
75-79	77.5 %	69.4 %	70.2 %	61.2 %	44.0 %
80 and over	83.0 %	72.9 %	76.9 %	65.6 %	57.4 %
Total “Gaelic only”	52.2 %	35.6 %	28.3 %	15.5 %	12.8 %

Table 13: Percentage of persons speaking Gàidhlig but no English (aged three years and over) for different age groups in island parishes of former Ross & Cromarty according to census data from 1891 to 1931

Number of persons and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in former County Council Electoral Divisions (Ross & Cromarty) (Population aged 3 years and over)						
Area	1961/71 Code	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Uig (Siar) (Uig (West) CCED)	UW	994 84.5 % ¹⁶	820 94.8 %	729 87.5 %	584 81.9 %	442 69.1 %
Uig (Ear) (Uig (East) CCED)	UE	1,122 97.0 %	945 93.6 %	828 91.3 %	683 81.1 %	604 70.5 %

Table 14: Number of persons speaking Gàidhlig and all Gàidhlig-speakers as a percentage of the population (aged three years and over) for pre-1975 county council electoral divisions (CCED) according to census data from 1961 to 2001

¹⁵ Island of *Leòdhas* (Lewis) with civil parishes of *Barabhas* (Barvas), *Na Lochan* (Lochs), *Steòrnabhagh* (Stornoway) and *Uig* (Scotland Census Office, 1932).

¹⁶ Artificially low percentage because of the presence of around 200 persons of military personnel.



Gaelic knowledge according to age groups and whether born in Scotland <i>Census 1981: Uig & Carlabhagh</i> ¹⁷						
Map No	Census output area ¹⁸	Age groups				Born in Scotland ¹⁹
		3 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+	
01	<i>Breanais</i>	47 88.7%	16 59.3%	46 85.2%	30 93.8%	138 94.5%
02+03	<i>Àird Uig, Miabhaig & Uig</i>	42 87.5%	29 96.7%	52 100.0%	69 95.8%	186 94.4%
04	<i>Cairisiadar & Einacleit</i>	28 87.5%	12 70.6%	42 93.3%	22 95.7%	100 95.2%
05	<i>Linsiadair</i>	22 78.6%	9 100.0%	20 90.9%	14 87.5%	65 95.6%
06+07	<i>Beàrnaraigh</i> (Great Bernera)	69 84.1%	48 84.2%	64 92.8%	60 92.3%	236 88.4%
08	<i>Calanais & Gearraidh na h-Aibhne</i>	69 94.5%	28 80.0%	36 94.7%	34 87.2%	167 93.3%
09+10	<i>Breascleit</i>	57 81.4%	44 78.6%	45 100.0%	51 96.2%	197 94.3%
11+12	<i>Tolastaidh Chaolais & Dùn Charlabhaigh</i>	46 100.0%	26 76.5%	35 92.1%	53 94.6%	157 96.9%
03+14	<i>Gead Gorm & Na Gearrannan</i>	30 81.1%	18 64.3%	37 97.4%	33 97.1%	115 91.3%
15+16	<i>Dail Beag & Carlabhagh</i> (Carloway)	39 90.7%	36 100.0%	48 94.1%	73 97.3%	195 97.0%
Total	<i>Uig & Carlabhagh</i> (Uig & Carloway)	440 86.8%	265 81.0%	418 93.7%	439 95.6%	1,536 93.7%

Table 15: Population with Gàidhlig knowledge in output areas of Uig & Carlabhagh (Uig & Carloway) according to age group and birthplace in 1981

¹⁷ Figures may not add up exactly because of measures to keep returns anonymous.

¹⁸ A more detailed list of all locations in each output area is to be found in section IV.

¹⁹ Scottish born population aged 3 years and over.



Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers ²⁰ <i>Uig</i>							
Map No	Census output area ²¹	1981		1991		2001	
01	<i>Breanais</i>	139	84.9 %	87	75.0 %	62	72.1 %
02	<i>Aird Uig</i>	187	94.1 %	76	77.5 %	85	64.9 %
03	<i>Uig</i>			80	83.0 %	49	66.2 %
04	<i>Cairisiadar</i>	106	92.3 %	82	90.4 %	44	71.0 %
05	<i>Linsiadar</i>	64	86.7 %	59	91.0 %	52	78.8 %
06	<i>Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera): Breacleit</i>	233	86.4 %	120	80.1 %	86	67.2 %
07	<i>Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera): Tobson</i>			80	82.2 %	64	61.0 %
08	<i>Calanais</i>	164	89.7 %	139	75.1 %	124	68.1 %
09	<i>Breascleit a</i>	195	88.4 %	72	80.4 %	53	68.0 %
10	<i>Breascleit b</i>			97	87.0 %	82	73.9 %
11	<i>Tolastaidh Chaolais</i>	162	94.3 %	43	84.9 %	61	67.8 %
12	<i>Dùn Charlabhaigh</i>			72	88.1 %	58	84.1 %
13	<i>Gead Gorm</i>	192	95.1 %	96	78.2 %	77	70.6 %
14	<i>Na Gearrannan</i>			59	95.3 %	57	64.8 %
15	<i>Carlabhagh (Carloway)</i>	115	85.4 %	51	72.6 %	63	72.4 %
16	<i>Dail Beag</i>			54	78.9 %	37	60.7 %

Table 16: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers for the census output areas in *Uig & Carlabhagh* (Uig & Carloway) according to data from 1981 to 2001

<i>Uig & Carlabhagh: Gàidhlig-speaking in Age Groups (1971-2001)</i>								
Age group	1971 ²²		1981		1991		2001	
0-2²³	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	8	26.7 %
3-4	35 (+11)	76.7 %	23	71.9 %	14	53.8 %	12	42.9 %
5-24	440 (+2)	94.0 %	408	82.4 %	247	72.1 %	212	66.3 %
25-44	300 (+1)	89.9 %	266	81.3 %	266	69.8 %	235	60.7 %
45-64	510 (+2)	97.5 %	415	93.0 %	340	83.6 %	245	65.0 %
65 +	470 (+4)	97.7 %	439	95.6 %	400	91.8 %	342	88.8 %
Total (3 years and over)	1,745 (+20)	94.1 %	1,557	89.5 %	1,267	79.2 %	1,046	69.9 %
Born in Scotland	n/a	n/a	1,534	93.5 %	1,242	86.0 %	1,011	78.7 %

Table 17: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in different age groups in *Uig & Carlabhagh* (Uig & Carloway) according to data from 1971 to 2001

²⁰ Statistical base is the population aged 3 years and over for 1981 and 1991 and the total population in 2001.

²¹ 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 locations for each output area is to be found in Annex D.

²² Speakers of Gàidhlig but not English in 1971 are distributed in age groups according to general distribution for the counties of Inverness-shire and Ross & Cromarty (approximate numbers are given in brackets).

²³ Information only available since 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)
01	<i>Breanais</i>	12	92.3 %	65	75.6 %	+ 16.7 %	92.7 %
02	<i>Aird Uig</i>	26	66.7 %	91	69.5 %	- 2.8 %	82.5 %
03	<i>Uig</i>	15	83.3 %	58	78.4 %	+ 4.9 %	85.9 %
04	<i>Cairisiadar</i>	8	72.7 %	49	79.0 %	- 6.3 %	93.9 %
05	<i>Linsiadar</i>	9	69.2 %	56	84.9 %	- 15.7 %	86.5 %
06	<i>Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera): Breacleit</i>	18	72.0 %	102	79.7 %	- 7.7 %	81.2 %
07	<i>Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera): Tobson</i>	17	68.0 %	72	68.8 %	- 0.8 %	79.1 %
08	<i>Calanais</i>	46	83.6 %	143	78.6 %	+ 5.0 %	82.7 %
09	<i>Breascleit a</i>	16	84.2 %	58	74.4 %	+ 9.8 %	90.3 %
10	<i>Breascleit b</i>	23	92.0 %	89	80.2 %	+ 11.8 %	84.5 %
11	<i>Tolastaidh Chaolais</i>	15	75.0 %	69	76.7 %	- 1.7 %	89.3 %
12	<i>Dùn Charlabhaigh</i>	14	82.4 %	59	85.5 %	- 3.1 %	93.5 %
13	<i>Gead Gorm</i>	13	50.0 %	82	75.2 %	- 25.2 %	82.0 %
14	<i>Na Gearrannan</i>	17	68.0 %	66	75.0 %	- 7.0 %	81.8 %
15	<i>Carlabhagh (Carloway)</i>	24	75.0 %	70	80.5 %	- 5.5 %	87.0 %
16	<i>Dail Beag</i>	13	86.7 %	52	85.3 %	+ 1.4 %	87.7 %

Table 18: Intergenerational viability and Gàidhlig-speakers born in Scotland in Uig & Carlabhagh (Uig & Carloway) according to census data of 2001



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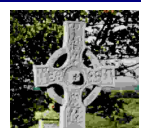
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III. Some Valuable Comments about Census Information

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 list 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>Uig & Carlabhagh</i>				
Map No.	Census output area ²⁴	Area Codes		
		1961 1971	1981 1991	2001
01	<i>Breanais, Eadar dha Fhadhail, Mangurstadh, Càrnais, Timsgearraidh, Loidse Uig & Islibhig</i>	UW	56AG15	60RJ000063
02	<i>Aird Uig, Bhaltos, Cnip & Cliobh</i>	UW	56AG16A	60RJ000064
03	<i>Uig, Timsgearraidh, Riof, Cradhlastadh, Uigen & Loch Sgallair</i>	UW	56AG16B	60RJ000065
04	<i>Cairisiadair, Geisiadair, Giosla, Einacleit, Loch Croistean, Miabhaig & Loidse Mhorsgail</i>	UW	56AG14	60RJ000062
05	<i>Linsiadair, Iarsiadair, Crùlabhig, Lundal, Griomarstadh, Scaliscro & Ceann Loch Ruaig</i>	UW	56AG13	60RJ000061
06	<i>Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera): Circebst & Breacleit</i>	UW	56AG17A	60RJ000066
07	<i>Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera): Tobson, Tacleit, Crothair, Bhalasaigh & Barraglom</i>	UW	56AG17B	60RJ000067
08	<i>Calanais, Gearraidh na h-Aibhne & Loch a' Ghainmhich</i>	UE	56AG12	60RJ000060
09	<i>Breascleith</i>	UE	56AG18A	60RJ000068
10	<i>Breascleith & Calanais bho Thuath</i>	UE	56AG18B	60RJ000069
11	<i>Tolastadh Chaolais</i>	UE	56AG24A	60RJ000077
12	<i>Dùn Charlabhaigh & Ciribhig</i>	UE	56AG24B	60RJ000078
13	<i>Mullach Charlabhaigh & Gead Gorm</i>	UE	56AG25A	60RJ000079
14	<i>Na Gearrannan, Clach an Tursa, Gead Gorm & Borghastan</i>	UE	56AG25B	60RJ000080
15	<i>Carlabhagh (Carloway)</i>	UE	56AG19A	60RJ000070
16	<i>Carlabhagh Uarach, Carlabhagh, Dail Beag & Dail Mòr</i>	UE	56AG19B	60RJ000071

Table A-1: List of locations within individual census output areas and official numbers for different census dates for *Uig & Carlabhagh* (Uig & Carloway) – 1961-2001

²⁴ Placenames are given according to official information by the Ordnance Survey and used in modern maps. The placenames in the Outer Hebrides do have officially Gàidhlig names. “English” versions are only used in addition for major settlements. Therefore the old anglicised names are provided in table A-1 for a few prominent locations only.



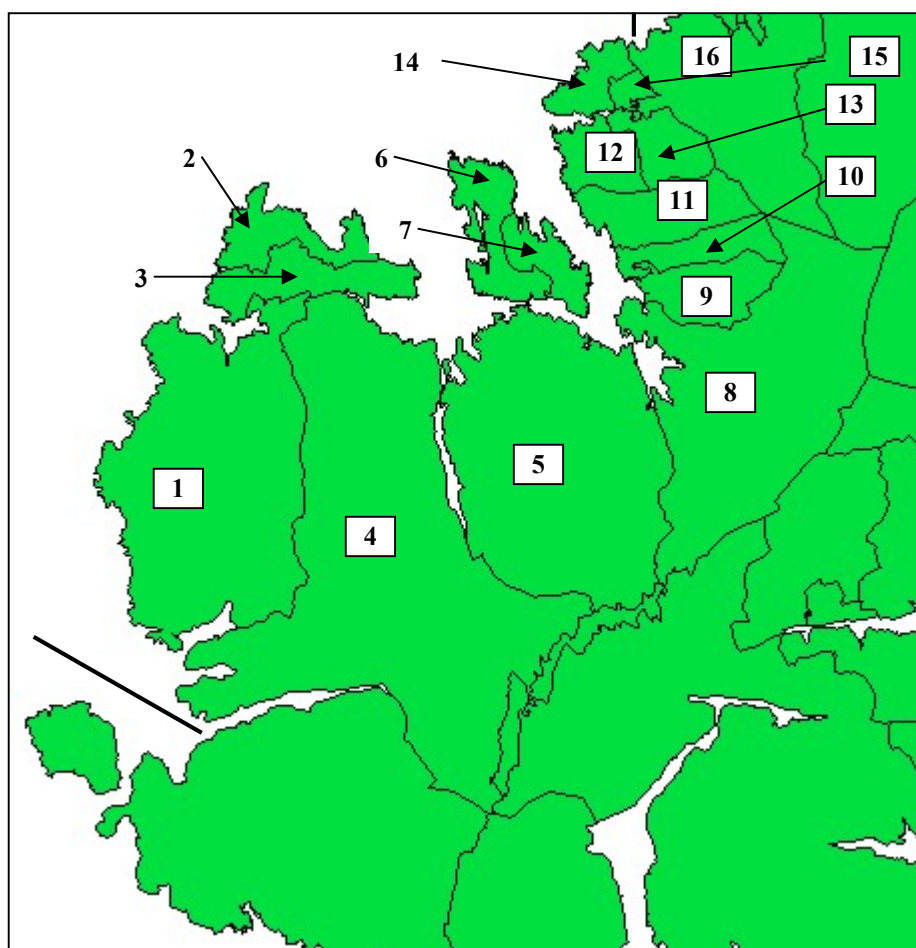


Fig. 10: Overview map of census output areas for *Uig & Carlabhagh* (Uig & Carloway) - numbers are provided in table A-1 ²⁵

²⁵ Digital boundaries courtesy of Ordnance Survey as part of the Geography Products provided by GROS for the 2001 census



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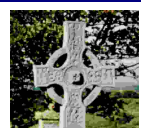
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VII. List of Abbreviations

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
<i>Vi</i>	Village



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