# Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Studies ${ }^{1}$ 

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

Author: Kurt C. Duwe

$2^{\text {nd }}$ Edition

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## Executive Summary

This publication is part of a series dealing with local communities which were predominantly Gaelicspeaking at the end of the $19^{\text {th }}$ 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 the vast majority of primary school children. However, even these positive developments could not counterbalance totally 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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## Foreword to the First Edition

Since 1881 every decennial population census in Scotland included a question about the "Gaelicspeaking" 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 sociolinguistic 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 $20^{\text {th }}$ 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 reanimation 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.

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 Gaidhlig place-names or expressions are preferred and the socalled 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

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Wedel, An Dàmhar 2003
Hamburg, An t-Sultain 2005

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 investigation ${ }^{2}$
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 look into the historical development of the use of Gàidhlig in the area from the end of the $19^{\text {th }}$ 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.

[^1]
## 2 The Historical Background

The population of Leòdhas as a whole maintained Gàidhlig as predominant community language until the end of the $20^{\text {th }}$ 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 2001 civil parishes of Uig and neighbouring Na Lochan (Lochs) ${ }^{3}$

### 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.

| Uig \& Carlabhagh |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Subject \Census | $\mathbf{1 8 8 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 8 9 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 0 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 1 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 2 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 3 1}$ |
| Găidhlig-speakers (3 years +) | $5,137^{4}$ | 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.

[^2]| Number of persons and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in selected districts of Uig\& Carlabhagh -1881-1901 ${ }^{5}$ |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Enumeration district(s) | All persons speaking Gàidhlig |  |  | Monolingual share of all Gàidhligspeakers |  |
|  | $1881{ }^{6}$ | 1891 | 1901 | 1891 | 1901 |
| Bhaltos (Valtos) | $\begin{gathered} 326 \\ \mathbf{9 8 . 2} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 394 \\ \mathbf{9 6 . 8} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 297 \\ \mathbf{9 2 . 0} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 163 \\ \mathbf{4 1 . 4 \%} \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 99 \\ \mathbf{3 3 . 3} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| Cliobh, Cnìp \& Na h-U̇igean (Cliff, Kneep \& Uigin) | $\begin{gathered} 1,290 \\ \mathbf{9 7 . 1} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 183 \\ \mathbf{9 7 . 3} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 207 \\ \mathbf{9 2 . 0} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 91 \\ \mathbf{4 9 . 7} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 98 \\ \mathbf{4 7 . 3} \% \end{gathered}$ |
| Brèinis \& İslibhig (Brenish \& Islivig) |  | $\begin{gathered} 282 \\ \mathbf{9 2 . 8} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 274 \\ \mathbf{9 4 . 8} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 74 \\ \mathbf{2 6 . 2} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 76 \\ \mathbf{2 7 . 7} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| Àird Ùig \& Tuimisgearraidh (Aird Uig \& Timsgarry) |  | $\begin{gathered} 341 \\ \mathbf{9 5 . 0} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 255 \\ \mathbf{9 3 . 4} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 165 \\ \mathbf{4 8 . 4 \%} \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 45 \\ \mathbf{1 7 . 6} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| Geiseadar, Cairisiadar \& Einacleit (Geshader, Carishader \& Enaclete) |  | $\begin{gathered} 305 \\ \mathbf{9 7 . 8} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 265 \\ \mathbf{9 4 . 3} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 164 \\ \mathbf{5 3 . 8} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 110 \\ \mathbf{4 1 . 5} \% \end{gathered}$ |
| Iarsiadar, Lundal \& Crùlabhaig (Ershader, Lundale \& Crulavig) |  | $\begin{gathered} 113 \\ \mathbf{1 0 0} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 162 \\ \mathbf{9 2 . 0} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \hline 82 \\ \mathbf{7 2 . 6} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 36 \\ \mathbf{2 2 . 2} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| Morsgail \& Giosla (Morsgail \& Gisla) |  | $\begin{gathered} 52 \\ \mathbf{8 8 . 1 \%} \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 52 \\ \mathbf{8 1 . 3 \%} \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 12 \\ \mathbf{2 3 . 1} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 16 \\ \mathbf{3 0 . 8} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| Bearnaraigh:Breacleit \& Tacleit (Great Bernera: Breaclete \& Hacklet) | $\begin{gathered} 592 \\ \mathbf{9 9 . 3} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 338 \\ \mathbf{9 5 . 5} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 378 \\ \mathbf{9 6 . 2} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 139 \\ \mathbf{4 1 . 1} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 101 \\ 26.7 \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| Bearnaraigh: Tòpsann \& Bhàlasaigh (Great Bernera: Tobson \& Valasay) |  | $\begin{gathered} 175 \\ \mathbf{9 6 . 7} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 183 \\ \mathbf{9 7 . 9} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 131 \\ \mathbf{7 4 . 9} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 53 \\ \mathbf{2 9 . 0} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| Loch a'Ghaimhich (Lochganvich) | $\begin{gathered} 53 \\ \mathbf{9 8 . 1 \%} \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 36 \\ \mathbf{8 7 . 8} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{array}{r} 34 \\ \mathbf{9 7 . 1} \% \\ \hline \end{array}$ | $\begin{gathered} 15 \\ \mathbf{4 1 . 7 \%} \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{array}{r} 23 \\ \mathbf{6 7 . 6} \% \\ \hline \end{array}$ |
| Breascleit (Breasclete) | $\begin{gathered} 343 \\ \mathbf{9 7 . 4} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 358 \\ \mathbf{9 5 . 7} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 376 \\ \mathbf{9 3 . 3} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 203 \\ 56.7 \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 125 \\ \mathbf{3 3 . 2} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| Gearraidh na h-Aibhne \& Pairc Bhr. (Garynahine \& Breasclete Park) | $\begin{aligned} & 2,230^{7} \\ & \mathbf{9 6 . 7} \% \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} 61 \% \\ \mathbf{9 5 . 3} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \hline 47 \\ \mathbf{9 7 . 9} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 25 \\ \mathbf{4 1 . 0} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 9 \\ \mathbf{1 9 . 1} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| Calanais (Callanish) |  | $\begin{gathered} \hline 301 \\ \mathbf{9 6 . 8} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 267 \\ \mathbf{9 7 . 4} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 185 \\ \mathbf{6 1 . 5} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \hline 85 \\ \mathbf{3 1 . 8} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| Tolastadh a'Chaolais \& Dùn Charl. (Tolsta Chaolais \& Doune Carloway) |  | $\begin{gathered} \hline 452 \\ \mathbf{9 9 . 6} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \hline 418 \\ \mathbf{9 3 . 9} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \hline 139 \\ \mathbf{3 0 . 8} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \hline 126 \\ \mathbf{3 0 . 1} \% \end{gathered}$ |
| Ciribhig \& Cnoc Charlabhaigh (Kirrivick \& Knock Carloway) |  | $\begin{gathered} 386 \\ \mathbf{9 1 . 9 \%} \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 356 \\ \mathbf{8 1 . 5 \%} \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 171 \\ \mathbf{4 4 . 3 \%} \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 101 \\ \mathbf{2 8 . 4} \% \end{gathered}$ |
| Na Gearrannan (Garenin) |  | $\begin{gathered} 208 \\ \mathbf{9 4 . 4} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 202 \\ \mathbf{9 8 . 5 \%} \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 176 \\ \mathbf{8 4 . 6} \% \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 125 \\ \mathbf{6 1 . 9} \% \end{gathered}$ |
| Carlabhagh (Carloway) | $\begin{gathered} 303 \\ \mathbf{9 5 . 9 \%} \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 306 \\ \mathbf{9 5 . 3} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 373 \\ \mathbf{9 1 . 2} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 242 \\ \mathbf{7 9 . 1} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 150 \\ \mathbf{4 0 . 2} \% \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |

Table 2: Number of persons speaking Gàidhlig and all Gäidhlig-speakers as share of population in Uig \& Carlabhagh according to local census data from 1881 to 1901

[^3]

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 Developments in the late $20^{\text {th }}$ century (Census 1951-2001)

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.

| Uig \& Carlabhagh |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Subject \Census | $\mathbf{1 9 5 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 6 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 7 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 8 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 9 1}$ | $\mathbf{2 0 0 1}$ |
| Gàidhlig-speakers (3 years +) | 2,525 | 2,116 | 1,765 | 1,557 | 1,267 | 1,046 |
| $\%$ of total population | $92.9 \%$ | $87.1 \%$ | $90.5 \%$ | $87.7 \%$ | $76.4 \%$ | $68.5 \%$ |

Table 3: Number of Gàidhlig-speakers (3 years and over) in Uig \& Carlabhagh (Uig \& Carloway) and percentage of total population speaking Gàidhlig during 1951-2001

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 Leòdhas (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 Gàidhligspeakers 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) ${ }^{8}$

[^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 ${ }^{9}$. 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 class rooms. This fact becomes even more evident when realising that the only comparatively positive example, the island of Uibhist a Deas (South Uist), is the second area in Na h-Eileanan an Iar where the majority of children entered primary school education via GME.

### 2.3 Development of literacy in Gàidhlig between 1971 and 2001

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 Gàidhlig-speakers <br> with ability to read Gàidhlig |  |  | Percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers <br> with ability to read Gäidhlig |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | $\mathbf{1 9 7 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 8 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 9 1}$ | $\mathbf{2 0 0 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 7 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 8 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 9 1}$ | $\mathbf{2 0 0 1}$ |
| Uig \& Carlabhagh <br> (Uig \& Carloway) | 1,485 | 1,341 | 1,044 | 851 | $85.1 \%$ | $86.1 \%$ | $82.3 \%$ | $80.8 \%$ |

Table 4: Number of people able to read Gàidhlig and Gàidhlig readers as a percentage of Gàidhligspeakers (1971-2001)

[^5]

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

|  | Number of Gàidhlig-speakers <br> with ability to write Gäidhlig |  |  | Percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers <br> with ability to write Gäidhlig |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | $\mathbf{1 9 7 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 8 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 9 1}$ | $\mathbf{2 0 0 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 7 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 8 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 9 1}$ | $\mathbf{2 0 0 1}$ |
| Uig \& Carlabhagh <br> (Uig \& Carloway) | 815 | 962 | 742 | 656 | $46.7 \%$ | $61.8 \%$ | $58.5 \%$ | $62.3 \%$ |

Table 5: Number of people able to write Gàidhlig and Gàidhlig writers as a percentage of Gàidhligspeakers (1971-2001)

## 3 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.

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) are found to be higher in school aged generations than in the working age population. Roughly half of the pre-school children at least understand the language.
- There has 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 is 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 are not the same over the whole area (table 14). Gàidhlig-speaking intensity varies 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 is 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 shows an encouraging sign with 8 children able to speak Gaaidhlig ( $26.7 \%$ ) 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 Leòdhas and indeed the whole of Scotland in 2001.

$\square$ Understanding Gaelic $\square$ Speaking Gaelic

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 |  |  |  |  |  | $\begin{gathered} \hline 1991 \\ \hline \text { Able to speak } \\ \text { Găidhlig } \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |  | Diff. <br> 2001 - <br> 1991 <br> n/a |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Knowing ${ }^{10}$ Gàidhlig |  | Able to speak \& read Gàidhlig |  | Able to speak Gàidhlig |  |  |  |  |
| 0-2 | 14 | 46.7 \% | 0 | 0.0 \% | 8 | 26.7 \% | 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 6: Knowledge of Gàidhlig in younger age groups in Uig \& Carlabhagh (Uig \& Carloway) in 2001 and 1991

[^6]

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

Aggregrating 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 Gàidhlig (Census 2001) in Selected Primary School Catchment Areas |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Primary School(s) | "Pre-School" <br> Age 0-4 | "Primary" <br> Age 5-11 | "Secondary" <br> Age 12-15 | Parents" <br> Age 25-34 |  |  |  |  |
| Uig <br> (Uig) | 3 | $23.1 \%$ | 32 | $91.4 \%$ | 7 | $87.5 \%$ | 18 | $64.3 \%$ |
| Beărnaraigh <br> (Great Bernera) | 5 | $50.0 \%$ | 22 | $81.5 \%$ | 9 | $81.8 \%$ | 30 | $76.9 \%$ |
| Breascleit <br> (Breasclete) | 10 | $71.4 \%$ | 39 | $83.0 \%$ | 26 | $96.3 \%$ | 34 | $70.8 \%$ |
| Carlabhagh <br> (Carloway) | 11 | $52.4 \%$ | 33 | $75.0 \%$ | 21 | $87.5 \%$ | 27 | $75.0 \%$ |

Table 7: 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 is 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 Gäidhlig-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 is 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 is 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.


Fig. 9: Share of primary school children attending Gàidhlig-medium classes in Na Lochan and Uig (September 1992 - September 2005) ${ }^{11}$

[^7]
## 4 Future Perspectives

The 2001 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 $\left(\mathrm{LVI}^{12}\right)$ shows the most favourable conditions of all districts in the Outer Hebrides. It is negligibly negative because the knowledge of Gàidhlig is also widespread among the younger generations. The language community indicator $\left(\mathrm{LCI}^{13}\right)$ is also relatively high and stands at over $85 \%$ (table 8).

| Area | Knowledge of Gàidhlig in 2001 |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | g age <br> 24) |  | ages | Difference (Language viability indicator) | Born in Scotland (Language community indicator) |
| Uig \& Carlabhagh (Uig \& Carloway) | 286 | 75.7 \% | 1,181 | 77.3 \% | -1.6 \% | 85.3 \% |
| In comparison: <br> Na h-Eileanan an Iar |  | 57.2 \% |  | 70.4 \% | -13.2 \% | 75.8 \% |

Table 8: Intergenerational viability and Gàidhlig-speakers born in Scotland in Uig \& Carlabhagh (Uig \& Carloway) compared with Na h-Eileanan an Iar (Western Isles) according to census data of 2001

The picture in the individual local communities of the area is almost universally encouraging for the survival of the Gàidhlig language. In most census output areas a vast majority of young people at least understand spoken Gàidhlig with maxima at Breanais and Breascleit (both at 92 \%). Regarding Gàidhligspeakers the language communities of Dùn Charlabhaigh ( $84 \%$ ) and Linsiadar (79 \%) show the highest percentages. Intergenerational viability looks especially healthy with almost one half of the 16 output areas boasting positive LVI values (table 16) reaching maxima of $+12 \%$ at Breascleit and $+17 \%$ at Breanais. LCI values are also respectable with a majority of communities showing percentages of more than $85 \%$ with a minimum of $79 \%$ in parts of Beàrnaraigh.

Developments since 2001 are still encouraging although the attendance of GME has slightly decreased recently (fig. 9). However, the provision of Gàidhlig-medium day nurseries attached to all primary schools may improve the language situation. In the school year 2003/2004 12 children were enrolled at the age of 3 or 4 .

In conclusion: This part of Leòdhas consists of some of the strongest Gàidhlig-speaking communities in Scotland. Language viability is almost 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 counterbalance totally the numbers of incoming monolingual English speakers causing the decrease in the proportion of Gàidhlig-speakers since 1991.

[^8]
## I. Supplementary Tables

| Gaelic and Gaelic only between 1881 and 1901: Uig \& Carlabhagh | Total Population | Gàidhlig and English | Gàidhlig <br> but no <br> English |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Census/Selected Area |  |  |  |
| 1881 (Speaking "habitually" Gaelic) <br> ----------- Inhabited islands (included in the above) --- <br> Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera) <br> Pabaigh (Pabay) <br> ----------- Villages (included in the above) - <br> Bhaltos (Valtos) <br> Breascleit (Breasclete) <br> Carlabhagh (Carloway) <br> ----------- Census registration districts (included in the above) - <br> Uig (Uig) <br> Carlabhagh (Carloway) | $\begin{gathered} 5,284 \\ 596 \\ 9 \\ 332 \\ 352 \\ 316 \\ \\ 2,256 \\ 2,974 \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |  |  |
| 1891 $\qquad$ Inhabited islands (included in the above) --- <br> Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera) <br> Orasaigh (Orensay) <br> ----------- Villages (included in the above) - <br> Bhaltos (Valtos) <br> Breascleit (Breasclete) <br> Calanais (Callanish) <br> Carlabhagh (Carloway) <br> ----------- Census registration districts (included in the above) - <br> Uig (Uig) <br> Carlabhagh (Carloway) | 4,621 535 2 407 374 311 321 2,416 2,959 | $\begin{gathered} 2,192 \\ 243 \\ 1 \\ 231 \\ 155 \\ 116 \\ 64 \\ \\ 1,240 \\ 1,399 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 2,236 \\ 270 \\ 1 \\ 163 \\ 203 \\ 185 \\ 242 \\ 1,074 \\ 1,406 \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| 1901 <br> Inhabited islands (included in the above) --- <br> Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera) <br> Na h-Eileanan Flannach (Flannan Island Lighthouse) <br> ----------- Villages (included in the above) - <br> Bhaltos (Valtos) <br> Breascleit (Breasclete) <br> Carlabhagh (Carloway) <br> ----------- Census registration districts (included in the above) Uig (Uig) <br> Carlabhagh (Carloway) <br> ----------- Electoral areas (included in the above) - <br> Uig an Ear (Uig East) <br> Uig an Iar (Uig West) | 4,487 580 4 323 403 443 2,207 3,076 2,256 2,207 | $\begin{gathered} \hline 2,768 \\ 397 \\ 2 \\ 198 \\ 251 \\ 223 \\ \\ 1,435 \\ 1,863 \\ 1,339 \\ 1,429 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 1,367 \\ 154 \\ - \\ 99 \\ 125 \\ 150 \\ \\ 635 \\ 1,088 \\ 732 \\ 635 \end{gathered}$ |

Table 9: 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: Uig \& Carlabhagh | Total Population | Gàidhlig and English | Gàidhlig but no English |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Census/Selected Area |  |  |  |
| 1911 Uig (Uig) CP | 4,462 | 3,029 | 1,123 |
| 1921 Uig (Uig) CP | 3,956 | 2,988 | 693 |
| 1931 Uig (Uig) CP | 3,364 | 2,624 | 571 |
| 1951 Uig (Uig) CP | 2,718 | 2,417 | 108 |
| 1961 | 2,430 | 2,064 | 52 |
| ----------- County council electoral divisions (included in the above) - <br> Uig an Iar (Uig West) CCED <br> Uig an Ear (Uig East) CCED | $\begin{aligned} & 1,225 \\ & 1,205 \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} 971 \\ 1,093 \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 23 \\ & 29 \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ |
| $1971{ }^{14}$ | 1,947 | 1,745 | 20 |
| ----------- County council electoral divisions (included in the above) - <br> Uig an Iar (Uig West) CCED <br> Uig an Ear (Uig East) CCED | $\begin{gathered} 900 \\ 1,050 \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | 810 935 | * |

Table 10: Number of persons speaking Gàidhlig between 1901 and 1971 - selected areas (civil parish, county council electoral divisions) in Uig \& Carlabhagh

| District Council of Leòdhas (Census 1961) |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Age | Population | Speaking Gàidhlig only |  | Speaking both Gàidhlig 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 11: 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

[^9]| Percentage of population speaking Gàidhlig but no English <br> in island parishes of former Ross \& Cromarty <br> $\mathbf{1 5}$ |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| Age group | $\mathbf{1 8 9 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 0 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 1 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 2 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 3 1}$ |
| $\mathbf{3 - 4}$ | $74.4 \%$ | $73.2 \%$ | $76.8 \%$ | $65.5 \%$ | $63.0 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{5 - 9}$ | $56.1 \%$ | $44.5 \%$ | $43.8 \%$ | $24.6 \%$ | $16.7 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{1 0 - 1 4}$ | $32.5 \%$ | $17.4 \%$ | $9.2 \%$ | $3.6 \%$ | $1.6 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{1 5 - 1 9}$ | $34.4 \%$ | $11.8 \%$ | $4.6 \%$ | $0.8 \%$ | $0.4 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{2 0 - 2 4}$ | $38.1 \%$ | $15.0 \%$ | $4.2 \%$ | $0.8 \%$ | $0.5 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{2 5 - 2 9}$ | $46.6 \%$ | $17.7 \%$ | $5.7 \%$ | $1.3 \%$ | $0.8 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{3 0 - 3 4}$ | $48.9 \%$ | $24.4 \%$ | $11.8 \%$ | $2.0 \%$ | $1.3 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{3 5 - 3 9}$ | $49.4 \%$ | $33.8 \%$ | $16.1 \%$ | $3.4 \%$ | $1.3 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{4 0 - 4 4}$ | $57.2 \%$ | $39.8 \%$ | $25.9 \%$ | $5.7 \%$ | $2.5 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{4 5 - 4 9}$ | $61.0 \%$ | $38.2 \%$ | $34.2 \%$ | $11.1 \%$ | $3.8 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{5 0 - 5 4}$ | $68.2 \%$ | $50.5 \%$ | $40.8 \%$ | $17.1 \%$ | $8.3 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{5 5 - 5 9}$ | $65.7 \%$ | $52.9 \%$ | $41.4 \%$ | $26.8 \%$ | $14.0 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{6 0 - 6 4}$ | $73.9 \%$ | $61.5 \%$ | $51.9 \%$ | $35.3 \%$ | $23.6 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{6 5 - 6 9}$ | $71.8 \%$ | $65.3 \%$ | $57.7 \%$ | $37.9 \%$ | $34.9 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{7 0 - 7 4}$ | $72.1 \%$ | $67.2 \%$ | $66.3 \%$ | $51.9 \%$ | $43.5 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{7 5 - 7 9}$ | $77.5 \%$ | $69.4 \%$ | $70.2 \%$ | $61.2 \%$ | $44.0 \%$ |
| $\mathbf{8 0}$ and over | $83.0 \%$ | $72.9 \%$ | $76.9 \%$ | $65.6 \%$ | $57.4 \%$ |
| Total ${ }^{\text {'Gaelic only" }}$ | $52.2 \%$ | $35.6 \%$ | $28.3 \%$ | $15.5 \%$ | $12.8 \%$ |

Table 12: 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 <br> former County Council Electoral Divisions (Ross \& Cromarty) <br> (Population aged 3 years and over) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Area |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | $\mathbf{1 9 6 1 / 7 1}$ <br> Code | $\mathbf{1 9 6 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 7 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 8 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 9 9 1}$ | $\mathbf{2 0 0 1}$ |
| Uig (Siar) | UW | 994 | 820 | 729 | 584 | 442 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (Uig (West) CCED) |  | $84.5 \%$ | $94.8 \%$ | $87.5 \%$ | $81.9 \%$ | $69.1 \%$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Uig (Ear) | UE | 1,122 | 945 | 828 | 683 | 604 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (Uig (East) CCED) |  | $97.0 \%$ | $93.6 \%$ | $91.3 \%$ | $81.1 \%$ | $70.5 \%$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Table 13: 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

[^10]| Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers ${ }^{17}$ Uig |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Map No | Census output area ${ }^{18}$ | 1981 |  | 1991 |  | 2001 |  |
| 01 | Breanais | 139 | 84.9 \% | 87 | 75.0 \% | 62 | 72.1 \% |
| 02 | Aird Uig | 187 | 94.1 \% | 76 | 77.5 \% | 85 | 64.9 \% |
| 03 | Uig |  |  | 80 | 83.0\% | 49 | 66.2 \% |
| 04 | Cairisiadar | 106 | 92.3 \% | 82 | 90.4\% | 44 | 71.0 \% |
| 05 | Linsiadar | 64 | 86.7 \% | 59 | 91.0\% | 52 | 78.8 \% |
| 06 | Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera): Breacleit | 233 | 86.4 \% | 120 | 80.1 \% | 86 | 67.2\% |
| 07 | Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera): Tobson |  |  | 80 | 82.2 \% | 64 | 61.0 \% |
| 08 | Calanais | 164 | 89.7 \% | 139 | 75.1 \% | 124 | 68.1 \% |
| 09 | Breascleit a | 195 | 88.4 \% | 72 | 80.4\% | 53 | 68.0\% |
| 10 | Breascleit b |  |  | 97 | 87.0 \% | 82 | 73.9 \% |
| 11 | Tolastaidh Chaolais | 162 | 94.3 \% | 43 | 84.9 \% | 61 | 67.8\% |
| 12 | Dùn Charlabhaigh |  |  | 72 | 88.1 \% | 58 | 84.1\% |
| 13 | Gead Gorm | 192 | 95.1 \% | 96 | 78.2 \% | 77 | 70.6 \% |
| 14 | Na Gearrannan |  |  | 59 | 95.3\% | 57 | 64.8 \% |
| 15 | Carlabhagh (Carloway) | 115 | 85.4 \% | 51 | 72.6 \% | 63 | 72.4 \% |
| 16 | Dail Beag |  |  | 54 | 78.9 \% | 37 | 60.7 \% |

Table 14: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers for the census output areas in Uig \& Carlabhagh (Uig \& Carloway) according to data from 1981 to 2001


Table 15: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in different age groups in Uig \& Carlabhagh (Uig \& Carloway) according to data from 1971 to 2001

[^11]| Map No. | Output Area | Knowledge of Gàidhlig in 2001 |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Young age (0-24) |  | All ages |  | Difference (Language viability indicator) indicator) | Born in Scotland <br> (Language community indicator) |
| 01 | Breanais | 12 | 92.3 \% | 65 | 75.6 \% | + 16.7 \% | 92.7 \% |
| 02 | Aird Uig | 26 | 66.7 \% | 91 | 69.5 \% | - 2.8 \% | 82.5 \% |
| 03 | Uig | 15 | 83.3 \% | 58 | 78.4 \% | +4.9 \% | 85.9 \% |
| 04 | Cairisiadar | 8 | 72.7 \% | 49 | 79.0 \% | -6.3 \% | 93.9 \% |
| 05 | Linsiadar | 9 | 69.2 \% | 56 | 84.9 \% | -15.7 \% | 86.5 \% |
| 06 | Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera): Breacleit | 18 | 72.0 \% | 102 | 79.7 \% | - 7.7 \% | 81.2 \% |
| 07 | Beàrnaraigh (Great <br> Bernera): Tobson | 17 | 68.0\% | 72 | 68.8 \% | - 0.8 \% | 79.1 \% |
| 08 | Calanais | 46 | 83.6 \% | 143 | 78.6 \% | + 5.0 \% | 82.7 \% |
| 09 | Breascleit a | 16 | 84.2 \% | 58 | 74.4 \% | +9.8 \% | $\mathbf{9 0 . 3}$ \% |
| 10 | Breascleit b | 23 | 92.0\% | 89 | 80.2 \% | + 11.8 \% | 84.5 \% |
| 11 | Tolastaidh Chaolais | 15 | 75.0 \% | 69 | 76.7 \% | -1.7 \% | 89.3 \% |
| 12 | Dùn Charlabhaigh | 14 | 82.4 \% | 59 | 85.5 \% | -3.1\% | $\mathbf{9 3 . 5}$ \% |
| 13 | Gead Gorm | 13 | 50.0 \% | 82 | 75.2 \% | - 25.2 \% | 82.0 \% |
| 14 | Na Gearrannan | 17 | 68.0\% | 66 | 75.0 \% | - 7.0 \% | 81.8 \% |
| 15 | Carlabhagh (Carloway) | 24 | 75.0 \% | 70 | 80.5 \% | -5.5 \% | 87.0 \% |
| 16 | Dail Beag | 13 | 86.7 \% | 52 | 85.3\% | +1.4\% | 87.7 \% |

Table 16: Intergenerational viability and Gàidhlig-speakers born in Scotland in Uig \& Carlabhagh (Uig \& Carloway) according to census data of 2001

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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 Gaelicspeakers 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 $2^{\text {nd }}$ World War. Because of the very small numbers involved and the ambiguety 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 Word 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 Gaaidhlig. 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 Uig \& Carlabhagh |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Census output area ${ }^{21}$ | Area Codes |  |  |
| Map No. |  | $\begin{aligned} & 1961 \\ & 1971 \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 1981 \\ & 1991 \end{aligned}$ | 2001 |
| 01 | Breanais, Eadar dha Fhadhail, Mangurstadh, Càrnais, Timsgearraidh, Loidse Uig \& Islibhig | UW | 56AG15 | 60RJ000063 |
| 02 | Aird Uig, Bhaltos, Cnip \& Cliobh | UW | 56AG16A | 60RJ000064 |
| 03 | Uig, Timsgearraidh, Riof, Cradhlastadh, Uigen \& Loch Sgallair | UW | 56AG16B | 60RJ000065 |
| 04 | Cairisiadair, Geisiadair, Giosla, Einacleit, Loch Croistean, Miabhaig \& Loidse Mhorsgail | UW | 56AG14 | 60RJ000062 |
| 05 | Linsiadair, Iarsiadair, Crùlabhig, Lundal, Griomarstadh, Scaliscro \& Ceann Loch Ruaig | UW | 56AG13 | 60RJ000061 |
| 06 | Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera): Circebost \& Breacleit | UW | 56AG17A | 60RJ000066 |
| 07 | Beàrnaraigh (Great Bernera): Tobson, Tacleit, Crothair, Bhalasaigh \& Barraglom | UW | 56AG17B | 60RJ000067 |
| 08 | Calanais, Gearraidh na h-Aibhne \& Loch a'Ghainmhich | UE | 56AG12 | 60RJ000060 |
| 09 | Breascleit | UE | 56AG18A | 60RJ000068 |
| 10 | Breascleit \& Calanais bho Thuath | UE | 56AG18B | 60RJ000069 |
| 11 | Tolastadh Chaolais | UE | 56AG24A | 60RJ000077 |
| 12 | Dùn Charlabhaigh \& Ciribhig | UE | 56AG24B | 60RJ000078 |
| 13 | Mullach Charlabhaigh \& Gead Gorm | UE | 56AG25A | 60RJ000079 |
| 14 | Na Gearrannan, Clach an Tursa, Gead Gorm \& Borghastan | UE | 56AG25B | 60RJ000080 |
| 15 | Carlabhagh (Carloway) | UE | 56AG19A | 60RJ000070 |
| 16 | Carlabhagh Uarach, Carlabhagh, Dail Beag \& Dail Mòr | 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

[^12]

Fig. 10: Overview map of census output areas for Uig \& Carlabhagh (Uig \& Carloway) - numbers are provided in table A-1 ${ }^{22}$

[^13]
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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 | Comhairle nan Sgoiltean Araich: Gaelic playgroup association |
| Comhairle nan Eilean (CNE) - later: | Official name of the Western Isles Council, the local government body of the Outer Hebrides (with abbreviations) |
| Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CNES) |  |
| Cròileagan | 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 | Gàidhlig-medium education |
| GMU | Gàidhlig-medium unit: Class(es) with Gàidhlig-medium education but as part of an English medium school |
| GROS | General Register Office for Scotland |
| LVI | Language viability indicator |
| LCI | Language community indicator |
| Mòd | 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 |
| Sgoil Araich | Gaelic speaking nursery school |
| Sràdagan | Gaelic speaking clubs for primary school children |
| Vi | Village |

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[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ Original census data shown or used were supplied and/or published by the General Register Office for Scotland. The use of this material in this study is permitted under Licence No. C02W0003665. Crown Copyright of census data is acknowledged.

[^1]:    ${ }^{2}$ Digital boundaries courtesy of Ordnance Survey as part of the Geography Products provided by GROS for the 2001 census.

[^2]:    ${ }^{3}$ There was no census taken in 1941 because of World War II - values are therefore interpolated between 1931 and 1951.
    ${ }^{4}$ These figures include returns from the district of Siabost (Shawbost) which was transferred from the parish of Uig to neighbouring Barabhas (Barvas) in 1891.

[^3]:    ${ }^{5}$ Values of Gàidhlig-speakers above $50 \%$ (and monolingual shares exceeding $10 \%$ ) are denoted in bold figures.
    ${ }^{6}$ Speaking "habitually" Gàidhlig.
    ${ }^{7}$ These figures include returns from the district of Siabost (Shawbost). The area was transferred from this civil parish to neighbouring Barabhas (Barvas) in 1891 (see volume 13 of this series for details).

[^4]:    ${ }^{8}$ Under 5: Gàidhlig abilities in the age group 3-4 until 1991, in 2001 in all age groups 0-4.

[^5]:    ${ }^{9}$ 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 Staoinebrig in Uibhist a Deas (South Uist).

[^6]:    ${ }^{10}$ Persons able to understand spoken Gàidhlig and/or able to speak, read or write Gàidhlig.

[^7]:    ${ }^{11}$ Gaelic Dept, University of Strathclyde.

[^8]:    ${ }^{12}$ 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 25 years of age and the total population.
    ${ }^{13}$ LCI: The "Language Community Indicator" is a measure of the relative strength of the language in the "local" population. It is calculated here by taking the values for Gàidhlig knowledge only for those who were born in Scotland. This is a rough estimation as many who are born in Scotland come from English speaking homes but nevertheless it is a better approximation of language strength than looking simply at the resident population.

[^9]:    ${ }^{14}$ 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.

[^10]:    ${ }^{15}$ 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.

[^11]:    ${ }^{17}$ Statistical base is the population aged 3 years and over for 1981 and 1991 and the total population in 2001.
    ${ }^{18}$ 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.
    ${ }^{19}$ 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).
    ${ }^{20}$ Information only available since 2001.

[^12]:    ${ }^{21}$ 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.

[^13]:    ${ }^{22}$ Digital boundaries courtesy of Ordnance Survey as part of the Geography Products provided by GROS for the 2001 census

