

# Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 033

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**Area:** *Asainn (Assynt): Innis Dubh, An Srathan, Bad na Baine, Inbhir Chirceig & Cnoc nan Each*

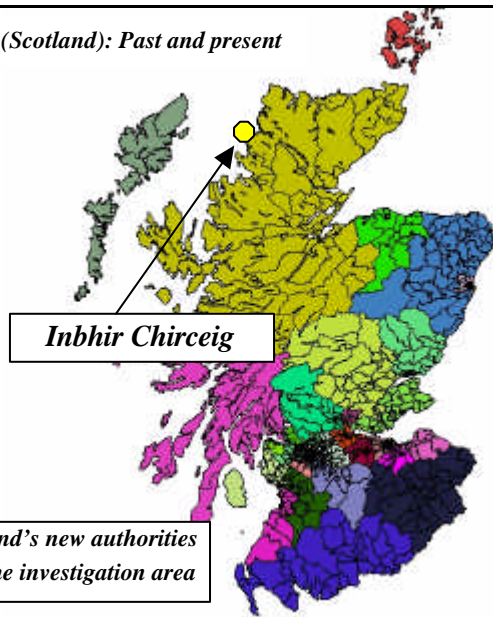
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms : Innisdhu, Strathan, Badnaban, Inverkirkaig, Cnockanach)

**Number of households:** 49      **Population present at census night:** 200

**Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig:** 95.2 %

| County     | Civil parish | Registration district | Enumeration district number | Census form pages |
|------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Sutherland | Assynt       | Stoer                 | 1                           | 1 - 12            |

*Alba (Scotland): Past and present*

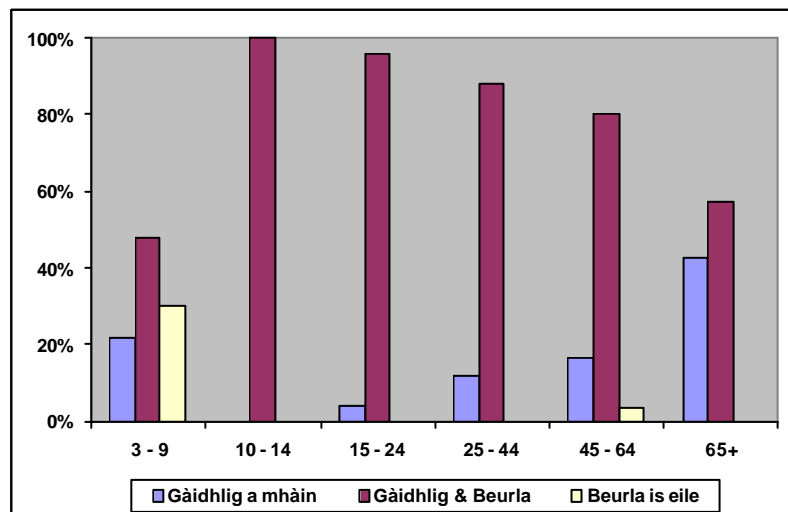


## State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

The local population was of course predominantly Gàidhlig-speaking in these crofting hamlets. Monolingual persons, however, were a small minority (making up less than a fifth of all speakers) and belonged mainly to the older generation. Apart from one grocer family Gàidhlig was spoken right across the community in all occupations and age groups. The relatively low percentage in the 3-4 age group can be related to a few doubtful census returns (see also remarks on page 4). With the exception of the hamlet of *An Srathan* (Strathan) all crofting communities were exclusively Gàidhlig speaking.

## Area description:

The coastal settlements around *Inbhir Chirceig* (Inverkirkaig) are situated between the remote *Coigeach* peninsula and the fishing harbour of *Loch an Inbhir* (Lochinver) to the north. The people in this south-western part of *Cataibh* (Sutherland) were mainly occupied with crofting supported by some near-shore fishing.



Age profile: Share of population speaking (1) Gàidhlig, (2) Gàidhlig & English, or (3) no Gàidhlig at all

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**Area: *Asainn (Assynt): Innis Dubh, Na Srathan, Bad na Baine, Inbhir Chirceig & Cnoc nan Each***

|  | Population enumerated |          |             |                            | Usually resident population (3+) |           |                    |                       |
|--|-----------------------|----------|-------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|
|  | Total                 | Aged 0-2 | Deaf & dumb | Visitors etc. <sup>3</sup> | Total <sup>1</sup>               | Gàidhlig  | Gàidhlig & English | Gàidhlig speakers (%) |
| <b>Age</b>                                 |                       |          |             |                            |                                  |           |                    |                       |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>200</b>            | <b>9</b> | <b>1</b>    | <b>4</b>                   | <b>186</b>                       | <b>32</b> | <b>145</b>         | <b>95.2 %</b>         |
| <b>3-4</b>                                 | <b>7</b>              | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>                   | <b>7</b>                         | <b>2</b>  | <b>2</b>           | <b>57.1 %</b>         |
| <b>5-9</b>                                 | <b>16</b>             | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>                   | <b>16</b>                        | <b>3</b>  | <b>9</b>           | <b>75.0 %</b>         |
| <b>10-14</b>                               | <b>14</b>             | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>                   | <b>14</b>                        | <b>0</b>  | <b>14</b>          | <b>100 %</b>          |
| <b>15-24</b>                               | <b>25</b>             | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>    | <b>1</b>                   | <b>24</b>                        | <b>1</b>  | <b>23</b>          | <b>100 %</b>          |
| <b>25-44</b>                               | <b>42</b>             | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>                   | <b>42</b>                        | <b>5</b>  | <b>37</b>          | <b>100 %</b>          |
| <b>45-64</b>                               | <b>58</b>             | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b>    | <b>2</b>                   | <b>55</b>                        | <b>9</b>  | <b>44</b>          | <b>96.4 %</b>         |
| <b>65+</b>                                 | <b>29</b>             | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>    | <b>1</b>                   | <b>28</b>                        | <b>12</b> | <b>16</b>          | <b>100 %</b>          |
| <b>Gender</b>                              |                       |          |             |                            |                                  |           |                    |                       |
| <b>Female</b>                              | <b>103</b>            | <b>2</b> | <b>0</b>    | <b>3</b>                   | <b>98</b>                        | <b>18</b> | <b>74</b>          | <b>93.9 %</b>         |
| <b>Male</b>                                | <b>97</b>             | <b>7</b> | <b>1</b>    | <b>1</b>                   | <b>88</b>                        | <b>14</b> | <b>71</b>          | <b>96.6 %</b>         |
| <b>Place of birth</b>                      |                       |          |             |                            |                                  |           |                    |                       |
| <b>Born in parish</b>                      | <b>169</b>            | <b>9</b> | <b>1</b>    | <b>2</b>                   | <b>157</b>                       | <b>26</b> | <b>125</b>         | <b>96.2 %</b>         |
| <b>In neighbouring parish<sup>1</sup></b>  | <b>9</b>              | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>                   | <b>9</b>                         | <b>5</b>  | <b>4</b>           | <b>100 %</b>          |
| <b>Gaidhealtachd elsewhere<sup>2</sup></b> | <b>18</b>             | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>    | <b>1</b>                   | <b>17</b>                        | <b>1</b>  | <b>15</b>          | <b>94.1 %</b>         |
| <b>Other places</b>                        | <b>4</b>              | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>    | <b>1</b>                   | <b>3</b>                         | <b>0</b>  | <b>1</b>           | <b>33.3 %</b>         |

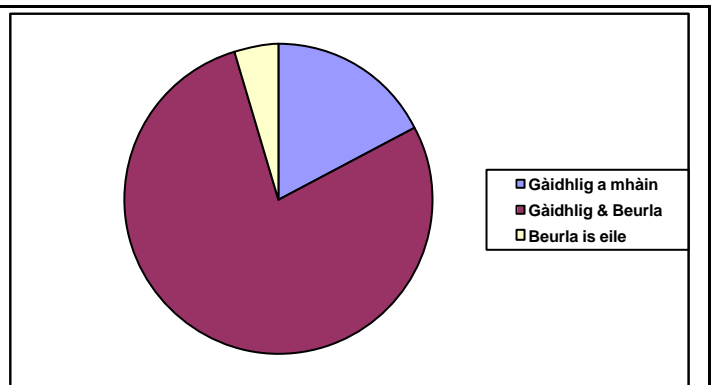
**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> Parishes of Lochbroom, Kincardine (both Ross & Cromarty); Eddrachillis, Creich (both Sutherland).

<sup>2</sup> Other parishes in Scotland with more than 50 % Gàidhlig speakers in the 1891 census.

<sup>3</sup> People described as visitors, boarders, lodgers or other similar terms.

<sup>4</sup> Number of enumerated persons who were (1) older than 2 years of age, who were (2) not deaf & dumb and who (3) did not live only temporarily in the area.



Share of population speaking (1) Gàidhlig, (2) Gàidhlig & English, or (3) no Gàidhlig at all

**Background of Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profiles:**

The 1891 census was the first such enumeration exercise with an unequivocal language question. After more than 100 years the original census forms are publicly available for detailed analysis. During research concerned with the “Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Studies” a vast number of such local statistics have been gathered about the Gàidhlig speaking population of Scotland in that year. As many of these results could not be included in the reports these concise fact-sheets are a welcome way to publish some of the “local gems”. More information is provided at [http://www.linguae-celticae.org/GLP\\_english.htm](http://www.linguae-celticae.org/GLP_english.htm).

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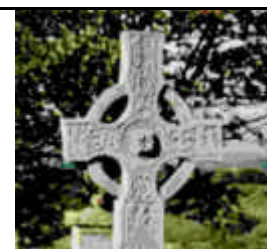
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Area: *Asainn (Assynt): Innis Dubh, Na Srathan, Bad na Bainne, Inbhir Chirceig & Cnoc nan Each*

|  | House-holds | Usually resident population (3+) |           |                    |                       |
|--|-------------|----------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|
|  |             | Total                            | Gàidhlig  | Gàidhlig & English | Gàidhlig speakers (%) |
| <b><i>Taobh Inbhir Chirceig</i></b>        | <b>49</b>   | <b>186</b>                       | <b>32</b> | <b>145</b>         | <b>95.2 %</b>         |
| <b>Individual communities</b>              |             |                                  |           |                    |                       |
| <i>Innis Dubh</i><br>(Innisdhu)            | 1           | 3                                | 0         | 3                  | 100 %                 |
| <i>Na Srathan</i><br>(Strathan)            | 16          | 56                               | 2         | 47                 | 87.5 %                |
| <i>Bad na Bainne</i><br>(Badnaban)         | 9           | 28                               | 6         | 22                 | 100 %                 |
| <i>Inbhir Chirceig</i><br>(Inverkirkaig)   | 22          | 95                               | 24        | 70                 | 98.9 %                |
| <i>Cnoc nan Each</i><br>(Knocknanach)      | 1           | 4                                | 0         | 3                  | 75.0 %                |
| <b>Language of parents</b>                 |             |                                  |           |                    |                       |
| <b>Both parents Gàidhlig speaking</b>      | <b>13</b>   | <b>67</b>                        | <b>8</b>  | <b>54</b>          | <b>92.5 %</b>         |
| <b>Single parent Gàidhlig speaking</b>     | <b>8</b>    | <b>43</b>                        | <b>5</b>  | <b>35</b>          | <b>93.0 %</b>         |
| <b>One parent Gàidhlig speaking</b>        | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>                         | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b>           | <b>-</b>              |
| <b>No Gàidhlig speaking parent</b>         | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>                         | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b>           | <b>-</b>              |
| <b>Households with no children (0-14)</b>  | <b>28</b>   | <b>76</b>                        | <b>19</b> | <b>56</b>          | <b>98.7 %</b>         |
| <b>Occupation of head of household</b>     |             |                                  |           |                    |                       |
| <b>Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.</b>    | <b>42</b>   | <b>160</b>                       | <b>32</b> | <b>126</b>         | <b>98.8 %</b>         |
| <b>Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar</b>     | <b>1</b>    | <b>4</b>                         | <b>0</b>  | <b>3</b>           | <b>75.0 %</b>         |
| <b>Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.</b> | <b>1</b>    | <b>6</b>                         | <b>0</b>  | <b>6</b>           | <b>100 %</b>          |
| <b>Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.</b>    | <b>3</b>    | <b>9</b>                         | <b>0</b>  | <b>5</b>           | <b>55.6 %</b>         |
| <b>Living on private means</b>             | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>                         | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b>           | <b>-</b>              |
| <b>Manager, coachman, cook, etc.</b>       | <b>1</b>    | <b>2</b>                         | <b>0</b>  | <b>2</b>           | <b>100 %</b>          |
| <b>Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.</b> | <b>1</b>    | <b>5</b>                         | <b>0</b>  | <b>3</b>           | <b>60.0 %</b>         |
| <b>Remaining occupations</b>               | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>                         | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b>           | <b>-</b>              |

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Additional individual profiles may be downloaded from a special page on the Linguae Celticae website: [http://www.linguae-celticae.org/GLP\\_english.htm](http://www.linguae-celticae.org/GLP_english.htm)



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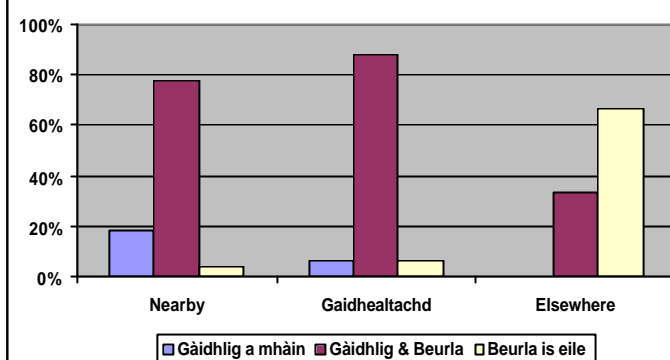
## Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

Almost all residents born in the *Gaidhealtachd* spoke Gàidhlig although only a small minority was monolingual. Those born elsewhere were far less likely to speak the local tongue.

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Born either in Assynt or in the adjacent parishes of Lochbroom and Kincardine (both Ross & Cromarty) or Eddrachillis and Creich (both Sutherland).

<sup>2</sup> Born in other parishes of Scotland with more than 50 % Gàidhlig speakers in the 1891 census.



Speakers according to place of birth (1) nearby<sup>1</sup> (2) in remaining *Gaidhealtachd* <sup>2</sup>, or (3) elsewhere

## Remarks

1. Just nine persons did not speak Gàidhlig. Some of them were part of a grocers' family from Midlothian. Three young children with local background were also counted as not speaking Gàidhlig. However, these children were unlikely genuinely "English only" speakers. All three could be traced in the 1901 census where they were recorded as "G&E" i.e. speaking both Gàidhlig and English 10 years later. Therefore language transmission within families was still intact in the area during this period.
2. Official census figures in this western part of *Asainn* (Assynt) reported 148 bilingual inhabitants and 33 monolingual Gàidhlig-speakers out of a total population of 200 persons (90.5 %). The usually resident population consisted of 177 Gàidhlig-speakers (95.2 %) and just nine "non-speakers" of the local language.