

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 073

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Area: *Eilean nam Muc, Rùm & Canaidh (Muck, Rum & Canna): A'Ghallanach, A'Chill, Cill Mhoire, Giùradal, Na Hearadh, Diobadal, Ceann Locha, Sanndaigh & Canaidh*

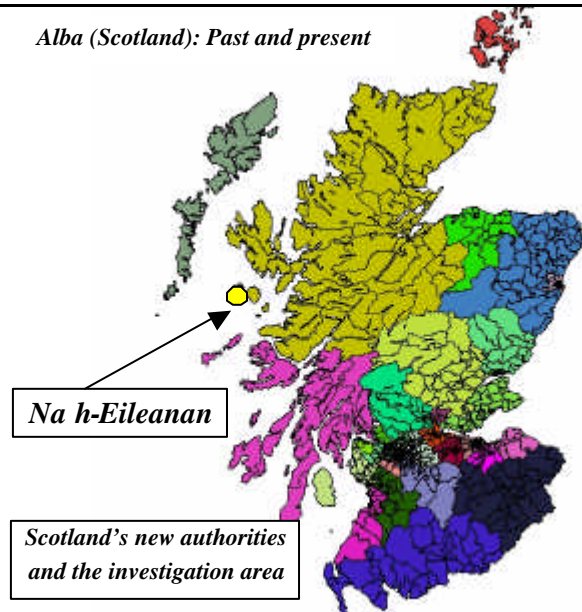
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Gallanach, Keil, Kilmory, Guirdil, Harris, Dibidil, Kinloch, Sanday, Canna)

Number of households: 42 **Population present at census night:** 200

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 90.6 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Inverness-shire	Small Isles	Small Isles	2	1 – 3
			3	1 – 3
			4	1- 5

Alba (Scotland): Past and present

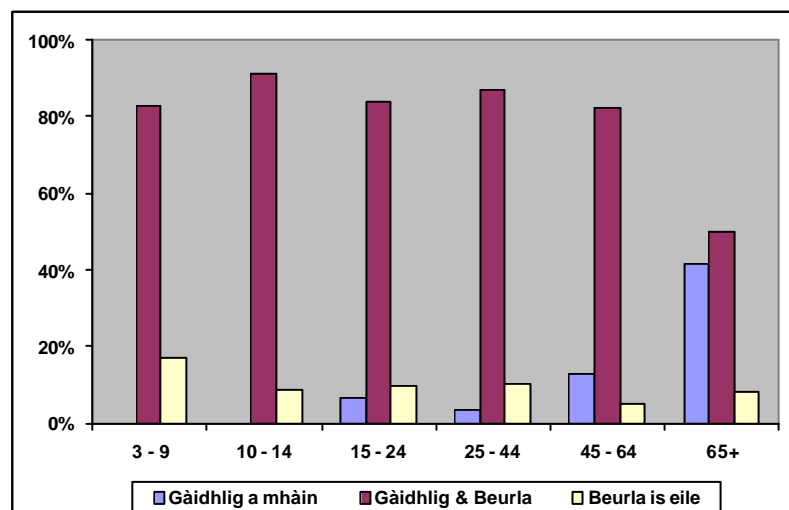


State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

The language was used almost universally by inhabitants with a local or *Gaidhealtachd* background. A few men had married wives from the Lowlands but the majority of their children still spoke *Gàidhlig*. Only a few residents, however, did not speak English, too. These persons were to be found mainly among the elderly. The main “alien” sections of the community were the owners and servants of Kinloch Lodge on the island of *Rùm*.

Area description:

This fact-sheet is concerned with four inhabited islands of *Na h-Eileanan Tarsainn* (Small Isles) south of *An t-Eilean Sgitheanach* (Isle of Skye). *Canaidh* (Canna) and *Eilean nam Muc* (Muck) were used for farming. On *Sanndaigh* (Sanday) crofting and fishing were the main occupations. *Rùm* on the other hand was owned by the wealthy Bullough family with only a few shepherds left as handy servants for this higher land-owning society.



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

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	Population enumerated				Usually resident population (3+)			
	Total	Aged 0-2	Deaf & dumb	Visitors etc. ³	Total ¹	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Age								
Total	200	13	0	17	170	18	136	90.6 %
3-4	3	0	0	0	3	0	3	100 %
5-9	20	0	0	0	20	0	16	80.0 %
10-14	23	0	0	0	23	0	21	91.3 %
15-24	33	0	0	2	31	2	26	90.3 %
25-44	40	0	0	10	30	1	26	90.0 %
45-64	44	0	0	5	39	5	32	94.9 %
65+	24	0	0	0	24	10	12	91.7 %
Gender								
Female	92	6	0	2	84	17	55	85.7 %
Male	108	7	0	15	86	1	81	95.3 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	98	12	0	0	86	15	69	97.7 %
In neighbouring parish¹	24	1	0	0	23	3	20	100 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	49	0	0	5	44	0	43	97.7 %
Other places	29	0	0	12	17	0	3	23.5 %

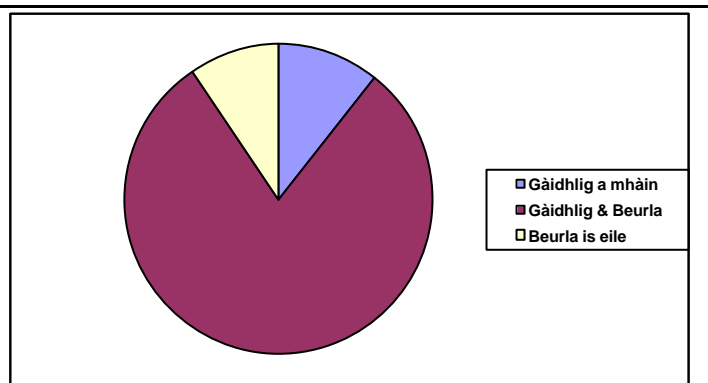
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Glenelg and Arisaig & Moidart as well as all parishes on the Isle of Skye (all Inverness).

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

³ People described as visitors, boarders, lodgers or other similar terms.

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



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

Background of Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profiles:

The 1891 census was the first such enumeration exercise with an unequivocal language question. After more than 100 years the original census forms are publicly available for detailed analysis. During research concerned with the “Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Studies” a vast number of such local statistics have been gathered about the Gàidhlig speaking population of Scotland in that year. As many of these results could not be included in the reports these concise 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.

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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Eilean nam Muc, Rùm & Canaidh</i>	42	170	18	136	90.6 %
Individual communities					
<i>Eilean nam Muc: A'Ghallanach</i> (Muck: Gallanach)	3	15	0	13	86.7 %
<i>Eilean nam Muc: A'Chill</i> (Muck: Keill)	7	26	3	23	100 %
<i>Rùm: Cill Mhoire & Giùradal</i> (Rum: Kilmory & Guirdil)	2	9	1	8	100 %
<i>Rùm: Na Hearadh & Diobadal</i> (Rum: Harris & Dibidil)	2	7	0	6	85.7 %
<i>Rùm: Ceann Locha</i> (Rum: Kinloch)	7	28	0	23	82.1 %
<i>Sanndaigh</i> (Sanday)	13	52	14	38	100 %
<i>Canaidh</i> (Canna)	8	33	0	25	75.8 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	10	59	1	57	98.3 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	4	24	1	22	95.8 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	4	27	0	18	66.7 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	2	6	0	3	50.0 %
Households with no children (0-14)	22	54	16	36	96.3 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	10	47	7	38	95.7 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	7	33	1	31	97.0 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	4	19	0	17	89.5 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	4	13	0	12	92.3 %
Living on private means	2	6	0	3	50.0 %
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	2	10	0	10	100 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	13	42	10	25	83.3 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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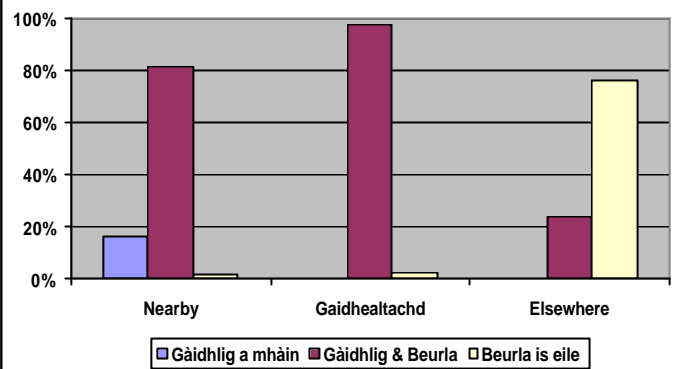
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

Residents born outside the *Gaidhealtachd* were unlikely to speak also *Gàidhlig*. Monolingual *Gàidhlig* speakers were confined to those born on the islands or nearby.

Notes:

¹ Born either in the Small Isles or in the adjacent parishes of Glenelg, Arisaig & Moidart or on the Isle of Skye (all Inverness).

² Born in other parishes of Scotland with more than 50 % *Gàidhlig* speakers in the 1891 census.



Speakers according to place of birth (1) nearby¹ (2) in remaining *Gaidhealtachd*², or (3) elsewhere

Remarks:

- There were 16 residents of these islands who were reported as not speaking the Celtic tongue. On *Eilean nam Muc* (Muck) two farmers were married to two ladies from the Lowlands. On the island of *Rùm* the wealthy Bullough family had established a stately household with some servants drawn from non-*Gàidhlig* speaking corners of the world. At census night also the landlady Alexandra Bullough and her 5 year old son were present at Kinloch Lodge. Not surprisingly the school teacher and her sister (both raised in Aberdeenshire) did not speak the mother tongue of the shepherds and some of the servants around them. Whereas on *Sanndaigh* (Sanday) all residents spoke *Gàidhlig*, the blacksmith and the farm grieve on *Canaidh* (Canna) were married to English monolingual wives. This meant that some of their children did not speak *Gàidhlig*, too.
- In original census report terms the islands had a population of 200 persons of all ages. 139 enumerated persons spoke “Gaelic and English” and 20 were counted as monolingual *Gàidhlig* speakers. This led to an “official” share of *Gàidhlig* speakers of 79.5 %. This was a staggering under-estimate of 11.1 % due to the inclusion of visitors and under 3 olds in the official census population base.