

Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Studies¹

Vol. 06: *Na Hearadh* (Harris)

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2nd Edition

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Executive Summary

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

Volume 6 is concerned with the southern part of the largest island of the Western Isles. Harris and its neighbouring island of Scalpay are traditionally considered as major strongholds of Gaelic in Scotland. This fact was underlined by impressively high percentages of Gaelic speakers in census counts right until 1981. However, the last two census dates saw a considerable weakening of the language community especially in the pre-school population. Currently language maintenance based solely on intergenerational transmission is not completely assured on Harris as in many other rural parts of the Outer Hebrides. Only in a few locations like the island of Scalpay the language remains remarkably strong in contrast to the population centres of Tarbert and Leverburgh. But still a very high proportion of islanders could at least understand spoken Gaelic (almost 80 %) in 2001.

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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.

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* place-names 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

Kurt C. Duwe



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1 Introduction

Geographically it is by far the largest island of the Outer Hebrides but it never really had a name of its own. The northern part is called *Leòdhas* (Lewis) and is separated from its southern neighbour *Na Hearadh* (Harris) by vast tracks of hill and moorland. For centuries this natural barrier was an effective hindrance to contacts between these communities but it led also to the development of two very distinct dialects of *Gàidhlig*. In addition both parts of the island were separated by the administrative county boundary between Inverness-shire and Ross & Cromarty. This volume of the study is concerned with the less populated part of the island: *Na Hearadh* with its well-known ferry port of *An Tairbeart* (Tarbert). *Leòdhas* with the “island capital” of *Steòrnabhagh* (Stornoway) is dealt with in five separate volumes of this series.

The parish of *Na Hearadh* comprised quite a number of adjacent islands with residential populations well into the 20th century. The most famous examples of course were the islanders of far away *Hiort* (St. Kilda) who were evacuated at last in the 1930s. The thriving fishing community of *Scalpaigh* (Scalpay) is today connected to the main island by a causeway and has thereby secured an economic lifeline. The other smaller islands were all deserted decades ago, notably *Scarp* and *Tarasaigh* (Taransay). Although traditionally part of the civil parish of *Na Hearadh* the other inhabited island *Beàrnaraigh* (Berneray) is dealt with in vol. 5 of this series dealing with *Uibhist a Tuath* (North Uist).

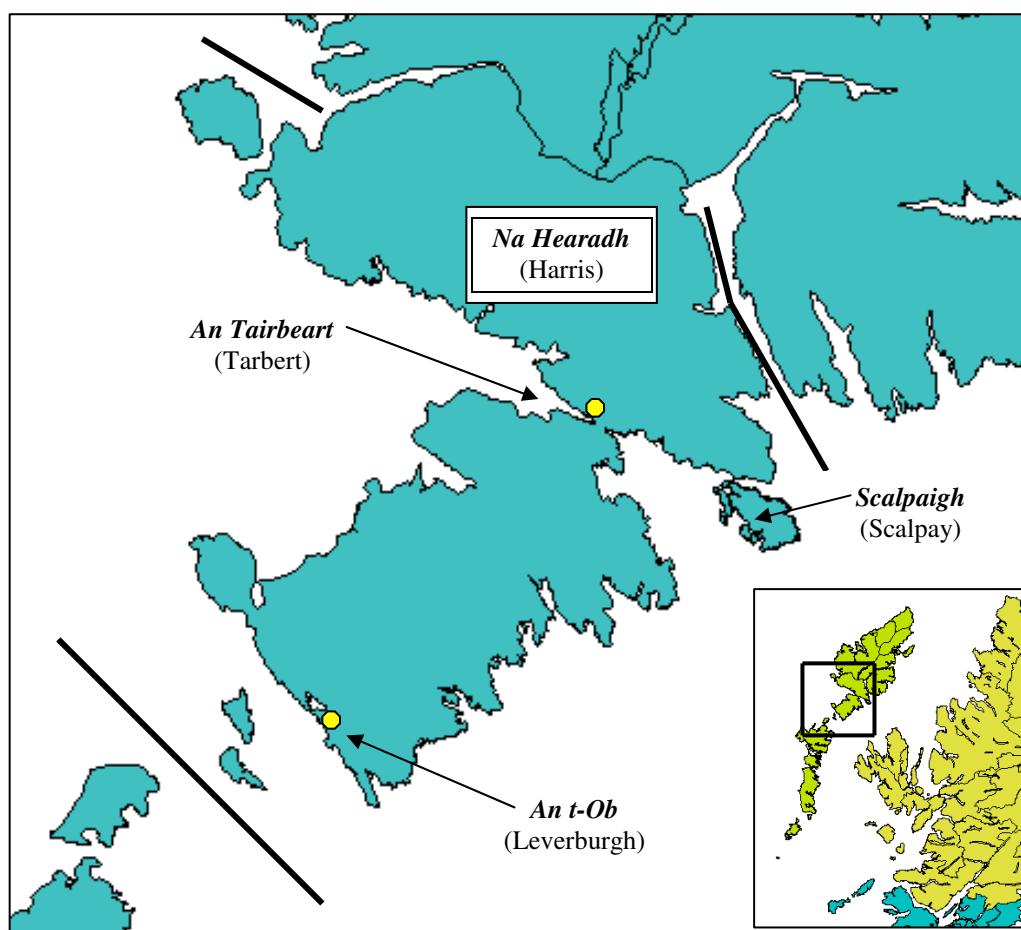


Fig. 1: Overview map of area under investigation²

² Digital boundaries courtesy of Ordnance Survey as part of the Geography Products provided by GROS.



The majority of the approximately 2,000 inhabitants are Protestants. This puts its mark on everyday life even today although the once very strictly obeyed Sunday is not as quiet as it used to be. *Gàidhlig* was used in these congregations very extensively as everyday church language and this fact helped to keep it in a central position as vernacular in the community in the past.

Although *Na Hearadh* has lent its name to the famous Harris Tweed the occupation of weaving is nowadays not a very significant economic factor anymore. Most inhabitants now live in the two major settlements *An Tairbeart* (Tarbert) and *An t-Ob* (Leverburgh) and on the island of *Scalpaigh*. The more rural parts have especially suffered from depopulation. Overall the number of inhabitants now is far less than half of the figure in 1881 with more than 4,800 islanders. With this background in mind the following short chapters look into the historical development of the use of *Gàidhlig* in the area from the end of the 19th century till 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 appropriate.



2 The Historical Background

On *Na Hearadh* like the other Hebridean islands *Gàidhlig* has been the dominant community language for centuries. The language was so much an integral part of island society that the *New Statistical Account of Scotland* (1831-45) stated rather simplistically under the respective heading: “*Language. – The Gaelic language is universally spoken.*”

In fig. 2 the development of *Gàidhlig*-speaking intensity is shown for *Na Hearadh* and its more southerly neighbour *Uibhist a Tuath* (North Uist). In both areas a considerable decrease since 1981 can clearly be depicted in this illustration. Within the following sections the temporal evolution of language incidence is described in more detail with special emphasis of course on decadal census results.

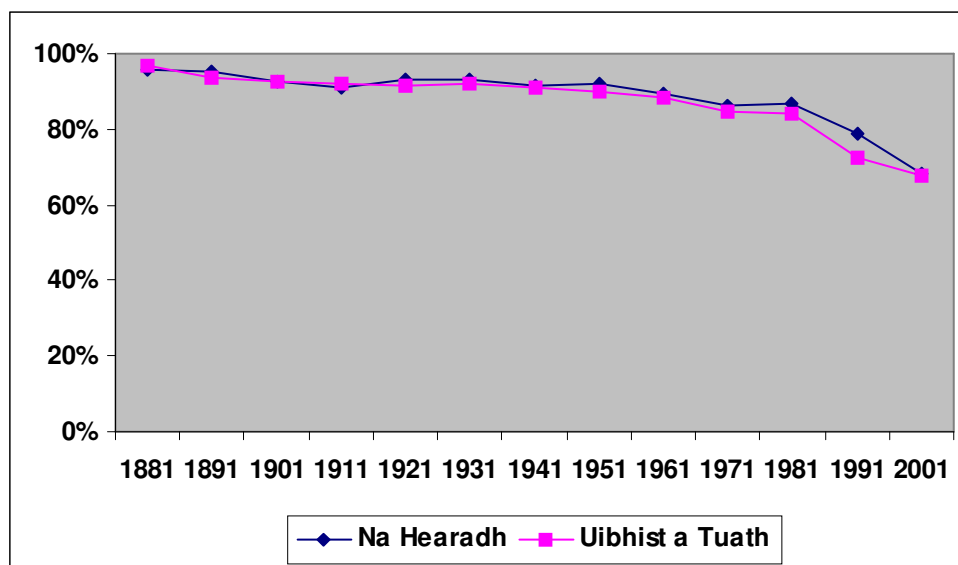


Fig. 2: *Gàidhlig*-speakers (3 years and over) as percentage of total population between 1881 and 2001 – civil parishes of *Na Hearadh* (Harris) and neighbouring *Uibhist a Tuath* (North Uist)³

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

Generally *Gàidhlig*-speaking remained almost universally spoken on *Na Hearadh* in this period (see table 1). The first census enumeration exercises on “Gaelic-speakers” in 1881 and 1891 saw practically none of the locally born population unable to speak the language. Even one half of the population spoke no English according to the census 1891. At pre-school age the majority of children in the Inverness-shire part of the Hebrides were returned as speaking no English at all even until 1931 (table 11) when the last census was taken before the war. Monolingual school education in English, however, effectively reduced overall the number of people who spoke only *Gàidhlig* (see fig. 3).

During the whole period *Gàidhlig*-speaking intensity was very high on the island, more to the contrary as in 1931 even the figures of 1901 were exceeded. Special strongholds of *Gàidhlig* were of course the remoter islands like *Scalpaigh* (Scalpay), *An Scarp*, *Hiort* (St. Kilda) and *Tarasaigh* (Taransay). All except *Scalpaigh* were sooner or later deserted by their inhabitants as a result of the harsh economic and of course natural climate.

³ There was no census taken in 1941 because of World War II – values are therefore interpolated between 1931 and 1951.



<i>Na Hearadh</i>						
Subject \ Census	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931
Gàidhlig-speakers (3 years +)	4,616	4,795	4,879	4,970	4,901	4,160
% of total population	95.8 %	95.4 %	92.6 %	91.2 %	92.9 %	93.1 %

Table 1: Number of Gàidhlig-speakers (aged 3 years and over) in Na Hearadh (Harris) and percentage of total population speaking Gàidhlig during 1881-1931

Census information generally is very detailed for the years 1881, 1891 and 1901. Table 2 provides an overview of the individual strength of the language in different parts of the parish (see also tables 9 and 10 in the annex providing details of smaller islands and electoral areas). In all districts Gàidhlig speakers returned percentages well above the 90 % mark. Considering the fact that visitors and very young children (aged below 3 years) were included in the population base it can easily be implied that almost all local people used the Celtic language. In some more remote townships Gàidhlig monolinguals even had a handsome majority. This was not only true in isolated places like the island of *Hiort* (St. Kilda) but also in coastal hamlets such as *Ceann Dibig* (Kendibig) and *Drinisiadair* (Drinishader). There was almost no change in the strength of the language between 1881 and 1901.

A closer look at the original census forms of 1891⁴ reveals that even the high figures in the census reports were essentially underestimates of the real strength of Gàidhlig. For example looking at the results of the enumeration district of *Caolas Stocanais & Leac a'Li* (Kyles Stockinish & Leckalee) the difference is obvious. Whereas the official census returns reported 232 persons speaking Gàidhlig (93.2 % of the total population) the figures of the usually resident population (aged three years or over) reveal a share of 96.1 % (Duwe, 2006). Just a handful of residents (9 individuals) had no “G” (Gaelic only) or “G&E” (Gaelic and English speaking) marks on their registration sheets. These persons were the members of just two prominent households. “*The certified schoolmaster originated from Ayrshire and apparently looked back to a long service in Aberdeenshire because his children were born in this Lowland area. The second family “with no Gaelic” was headed by a widowed house carpenter whose Dunbartonshire-born children also claimed to be unable to speak the language of their neighbours*” (Duwe, 2006). All other households were entirely Gàidhlig-speaking with an equal share of monolingual and bilingual persons. Very pronounced, however, was the difference between women and men. Whereas most women did not speak English, most men were reported as speaking also the official language.

The status of Gàidhlig in education on *Na Hearadh* did not differ from the one of the other Inverness-shire islands (see volumes 2, 3 and 5 for details). Therefore specific comments are not necessary here; the language was simply ignored or even discouraged in primary schools.

Right through to the eve of the Second World War Gàidhlig remained a strong community language in all places of *Na Hearadh* (table 2) although the number of speakers declined with the general trend of depopulation in the Outer Hebrides at the time. The famous linguist Carl Hj. Borgstrøm stayed for three weeks in *Stocanais* (Stockinish) to study the local dialect during November and December 1937. He remarked: “...even in the smaller towns like *Tarbert*, Gaelic is still the language of everyday use, though some persons have the habit of changing frequently from Gaelic into English and back again.” (Borgstrøm, 1940). Linguistically the Gàidhlig spoken on *Na Hearadh* was considered to belong to the southern dialect of the Outer Hebrides and to differ significantly from the language of *Leòdhas* (Lewis).

⁴ After a period of 100 years information provided on the original census forms is publicly available. At the time of writing this is already the case for census returns of 1881, 1891 and 1901.

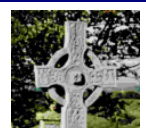


Number of persons and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in selected districts of Na Hearadh – 1881 – 1901 ⁵						
Enumeration district(s)	All persons speaking Gàidhlig			Monolingual share of all Gàidhlig-speakers		
	1881 ⁶	1891	1901	1891	1901	
<i>Beàrnaraigh</i> (Bernera)	416 92.0 %	484 96.6 %	481 91.8 %	291 60.1 %	362 75.3 %	
<i>An t-Ob & Easaigh</i> (Leverburgh & Ensay)	1,343 97.0 %	485 97.2 %	434 96.0 %	145 29.9 %	147 33.9 %	
<i>Cuidhtinis</i> (Cuidinish)		370 95.6 %	365 91.7 %	153 41.4 %	232 63.6 %	
<i>Geocrab & Manais</i> (Geocrab & Manish)		337 95.7 %	388 94.2 %	173 51.3 %	239 58.0 %	
<i>Scarasta & Taobh Tuath</i> (Scarista & Northton)		165 94.8 %	136 95.8 %	78 47.3 %	47 34.6 %	
<i>Tarasaigh</i> (Taransay)		55 100.0 %	56 100.0 %	65 90.3 %	23 41.1 %	35 53.8 %
<i>Scalpaigh</i> (Scalpay)	498 92.2 %	496 92.7 %	553 91.9 %	241 48.6 %	245 44.3 %	
<i>Stocanais & Leac a' Li</i> (Stockinish & Leckalie)	2,012 96.2 %	232 93.2 %	236 92.5 %	116 50.0 %	117 49.6 %	
<i>Scadabhagh</i> (Scadabay)		301 95.6 %	275 77.9 %	168 55.8 %	121 44.0 %	
<i>Drinisiadair</i> (Drinishader)		219 97.3 %	209 91.7 %	172 78.5 %	52 24.9 %	
<i>Ceann Dibig</i> (Kendibig)		129 98.5 %	120 96.8 %	120 93.0 %	26 21.7 %	
<i>An Tairbeart</i> (Tarbert)		426 94.9 %	478 89.3 %	150 35.2 %	106 22.2 %	
<i>Urgha & Caolas Scalpaigh</i> (Urgha & Kyles Scalpay)		422 96.8 %	455 92.5 %	203 48.1 %	86 18.9 %	
<i>Àird a'Mhulaidh</i> (Ardvourlie)		260 96.3 %	218 92.4 %	123 47.3 %	88 40.4 %	
<i>Abhainn Suidhe & Badarsaig</i> (Amhuinnsuidhe & Badersaig)		179 97.3 %	175 95.1 %	86 48.0 %	129 70.1 %	
<i>An Scarp</i> (Scarp)		213 100.0 %	132 92.3 %	139 86.9 %	52 39.4 %	71 51.1 %
<i>Hiort</i> (St. Kilda)		77 100.0 %	71 100.0 %	73 94.8 %	56 78.9 %	41 56.2 %

Table 2: Number of persons speaking Gàidhlig and all Gàidhlig-speakers as share of population in Na Hearadh and nearby islands according to local census data from 1881 to 1901

⁵ Values of Gàidhlig-speakers above 50 % (and monolinguals exceeding 10 %) are denoted in bold figures.

⁶ Speaking “habitually” Gàidhlig.



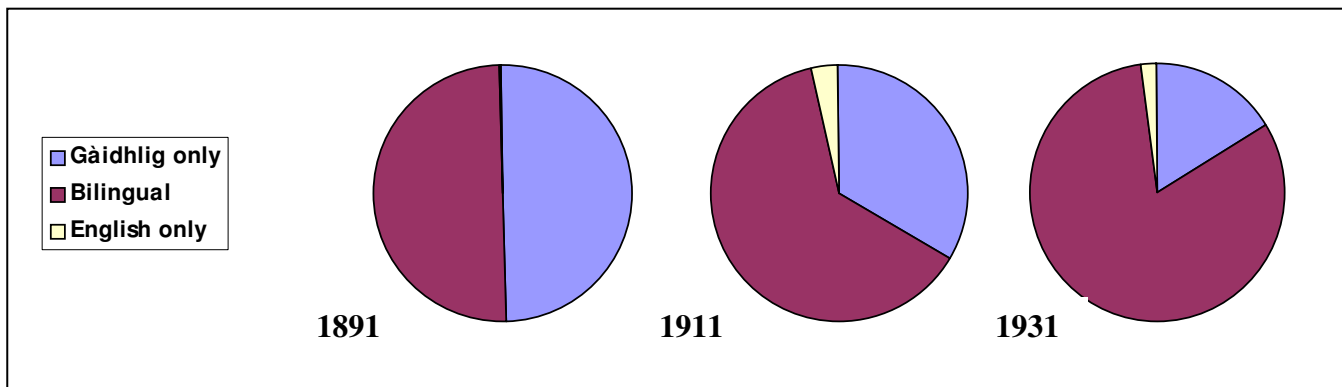


Fig. 3: Share of population speaking Gàidhlig and/or English in the study area according to census results in 1891, 1911 and 1931

2.2 Developments in the late 20th century (Census 1951–2001)

Many of the islanders left *Na Hearadh* after the Second World War causing a severe reduction of the population through the decades. The ability of speaking Gàidhlig, however, remained very strong until 1981 (see table 3). All County Council Electoral Divisions (CCED) boasted more than 90 % of the population speaking Gàidhlig (table 11). There was even an under-estimation of Gàidhlig-speaking intensity in the census because the military personnel on *Hiort* (St. Kilda) was counted as part of the population of *Na Hearadh (Deas)* and this diluted the intensity artificially.

<i>Na Hearadh</i>						
Subject \ Census	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Gàidhlig-speakers (3 years +)	3,666	2,940	2,485	2,282	1,861	1,447
% of total population	91.9 %	89.5 %	86.9 %	86.9 %	78.8 %	68.2 %

Table 3: Number of Gàidhlig-speakers (aged 3 years and over) in *Na Hearadh (Harris)* and percentage of total population speaking Gàidhlig during 1951-2001

In the Gàidhlig-speaking schoolchildren report (Scottish Council for Research in Education, 1961) the overwhelming majority of children lived in Gàidhlig-speaking homes and could then be considered as “mother tongue”-speakers. 358 of 380 primary school pupils were found to be first language speakers in 1957. In the first two primary stages of P1 and P2 in total 106 of 110 children understood Gàidhlig. The Inverness-shire Education Scheme started in 1960 (see Vol. 03 of this series) and probably had positive effects especially for those children who came to school without knowing any Gàidhlig. Within the coming years the effect of increased mobility of the population with the influx of more and more monolingual English speakers and the still widespread low self-esteem of Gàidhlig speakers had its effect also on the school population.

A comparable study by Mackinnon (1977) found only 190 of 286 primary school children (66.4 %) speaking Gàidhlig as first language in the 1972/1973 school year. This reduction then was mainly caused by the especially low figures (52.1 %) for first language speakers in *An Tairbeart*, whereas in the remaining rural schools the percentages still was very high at 86.9 %. Mackinnon concluded: “Fifteen years have considerably weakened the incidence of Gaelic as a mother tongue amongst Harris primary school children, but this is far less marked in rural areas. ... It would seem that there are indications that the deliberate choice of English as a home language amongst the non-crofting ‘working’ or ‘lower’ class may be made as the result of a belief that Gaelic may ‘hold back’ the children in terms of their life chances. As this phenomenon is most pronounced in *Tarbert*, the principal commercial centre of the Isle of Harris, it can be seen that taken together with the centralisation of educational facilities and the concomitant bussing and mixing of the school



children there is a reinforcement of the pressures causing Gaelic to be shifted out of such domains of usage as communication with age-peers and recreational facilities." These circumstances did not differ very much in *Na Hearadh* from those in other parts of the *Gaidhealtachd* at that time. Many Gàidhlig speakers considered the language as something second rate and useless outside their own homes. The author himself met a very nice landlady on the island in the 1970s who "could only laugh at the very thought of bilingual street signs in Tarbert."

The cracks in the language front were slowly getting thicker but were not becoming apparent in the census of 1981. Language shift was occurring more between Gàidhlig as a first (or home) language or second language. An additional positive impact on the educational side was provided by the success of the bilingual project (Murray & Morrison, 1984) which is shown in figure 4 where at early primary school age pupils learnt to read and write the language (see also Vol. 02 of this series). All primary schools except *An Tairbeart* and the tiny school at *Reinigeadail* were involved.

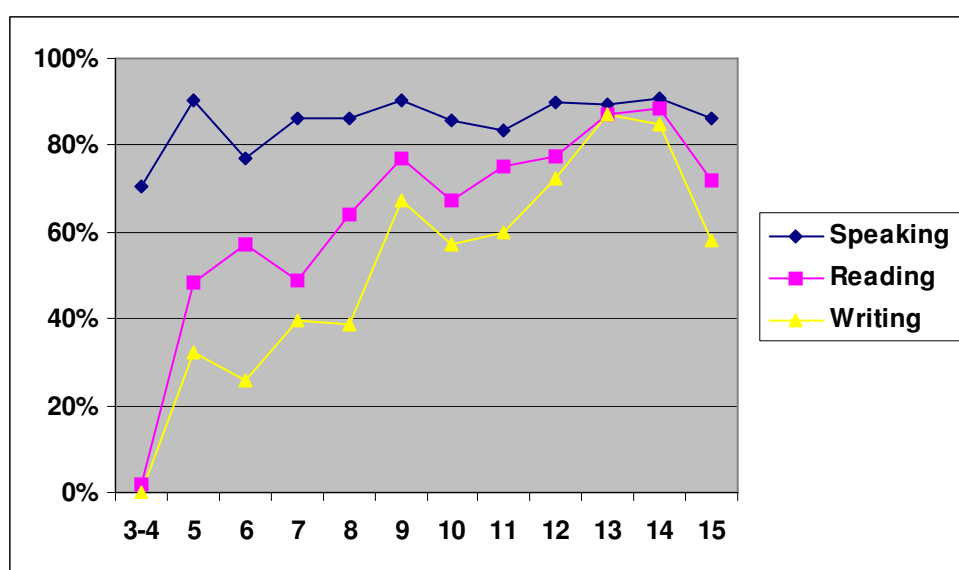


Fig. 4: Percentage of children able to speak, read or write Gàidhlig in different age groups in 1981 – *Na Hearadh* (Harris)

Between 1981 and 1991 a considerable reduction occurred in the Gàidhlig-speaking intensity in all groups (see fig. 5). The retreat of the language was most obvious of course around *An Tairbeart* whereas *Scalpaigh* remained as staunchly Gàidhlig as ever (table 13). During the following years the "Gaelic renaissance", however, was at last also reaching *Na Hearadh* and enthusiasm amongst parents for Gàidhlig medium spread. *Cròileagan* were established on *Scalpaigh*, in *An t-Ob* and *An Tairbeart*. Two Gàidhlig medium units were opened in *An Tairbeart* (1991) and *An t-Ob* (1992) with *sradagan* groups at both locations. But despite all this another severe decrease in the Gàidhlig-speaking pre-school population was experienced in 2001 (detailed analysis of the most recent census is provided in chapter 3 of this report).



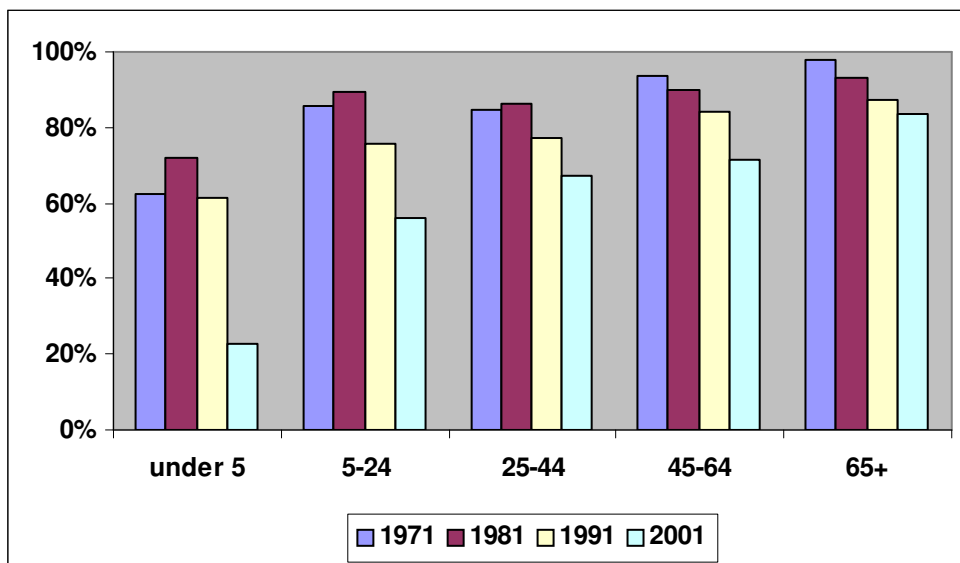


Fig. 5: Percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in different age groups between 1971 and 2001 – Area of Na Hearadh (Harris)⁷

2.3 Development of literacy in Gàidhlig between 1971 and 2001

Information on literacy became available from 1971 onwards: Census questions were introduced on the ability to read or write Gàidhlig (see tables 4 and 5 below). Generally literacy in the language on Na Hearadh was higher than in pre-dominantly Catholic areas of the Outer Hebrides. Reading or writing abilities were comparable to those achieved on Uibhist a Tuath (North Uist), Leòdhas (Lewis) and the northern parts of An t-Eilean Sgitheanach (Isle of Skye). This high literacy was attained in all age groups (see figure 6). The only significant improvements between 1971 and 2001 could and were achieved in primary school age from about 50 % to almost 80 % of pupils being able to read the language.

	Number of Gàidhlig-speakers with ability to read Gàidhlig				Percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers with ability to read Gàidhlig			
	1971	1981	1991	2001	1971	1981	1991	2001
Na Hearadh (Harris)	2,085	1,887	1,436	1,131	84.8 %	87.1 %	82.7 %	82.9 %

Table 4: Persons able to read Gàidhlig and Gàidhlig readers as share of Gàidhlig-speakers (1971-2001)

	Number of Gàidhlig-speakers with ability to write Gàidhlig				Percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers with ability to write Gàidhlig			
	1971	1981	1991	2001	1971	1981	1991	2001
Na Hearadh (Harris)	1,215	1,413	1,016	894	49.4 %	65.2 %	58.5 %	65.5 %

Table 5: Persons able to write Gàidhlig and Gàidhlig writers as share of Gàidhlig-speakers (1971-2001)

⁷ Under 5: Gàidhlig abilities in the age group 3-4 until 1991, in 2001 in all age groups 0-4.



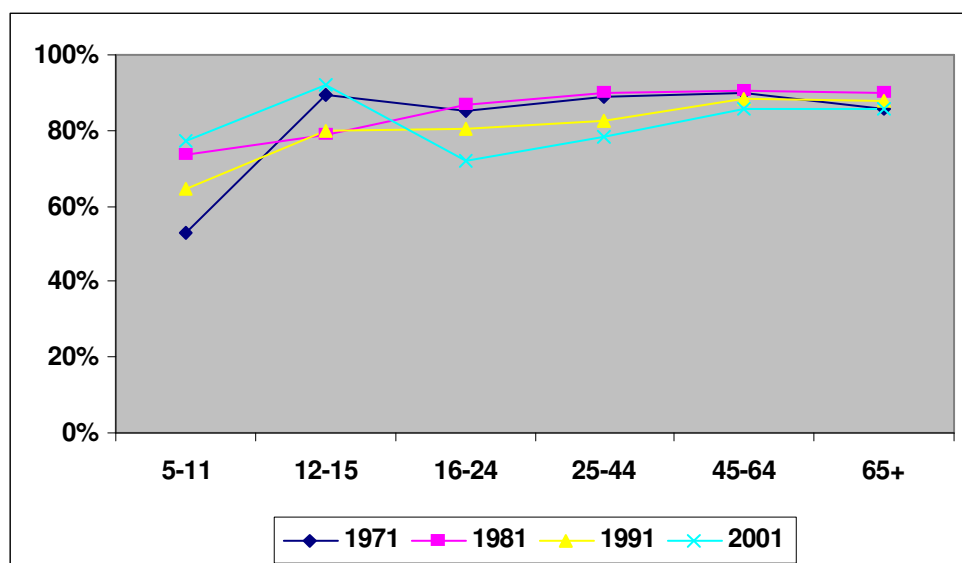


Fig. 6: Persons able to read *Gàidhlig* as a percentage of *Gàidhlig*-speakers on *Na Hearadh* (Harris) in different age groups (1971-2001)



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

Special consideration is given to educational aspects in section 3.2 dealing with the young generation in school catchments. In general the following conclusions may be drawn from the 2001 census information for *Na Hearadh*:

- The percentages of the population knowing or speaking *Gàidhlig* are slowly increasing with age, primary and pre-school generations are well underrepresented (fig. 7).
- Table 6 shows a strong decrease of language abilities in all age groups since 1991. The difference of percentages speaking *Gàidhlig* between all ages and the younger generation is still small; there has been generally a contraction of the *Gàidhlig*-speaking population in all generations (very probably predominantly caused by the in-migration of English speakers).
- Looking at the results of the small area statistics (table 13) *Gàidhlig* speaking ability was lowest around *An Tairbeart* (57 %), but highest on *Scalpaigh* (88 %) and at *Seilebost* (91 %). The ability to understand spoken *Gàidhlig* varied between 66.4 % (*Aird Aiseig*) and 95.5 % (*Scalpaigh*).
- Figure 8 provides an insight on the relative strength of local language communities. The majority of the population lived in neighbourhoods where between 65 % and 80 % knew the language and the rest of the islanders were part of even stronger language communities.
- Literacy level were very high on *Na Hearadh* in 2001 as it was traditionally so in Protestant *Gàidhlig* speaking areas. Over two thirds of speakers could read and write the language and more than 80 % were able to read *Gàidhlig*.
- Children under 3 years of age show language intensities of 16.3 % (speaking) and 46.9 % (understanding). Those 23 children were not spread evenly over the island but were concentrated in the rural output areas of *Direcleit* and *Seilebost* (11), on the island of *Scalpaigh* (5) and around *An t-Ob* and *Roghadal* (5) in the south.
- The new category of understanding *Gàidhlig* recorded 188 respondents (9.5 %) on *Na Hearadh* in addition to those 1,369 (69.0 %) able to speak the language.



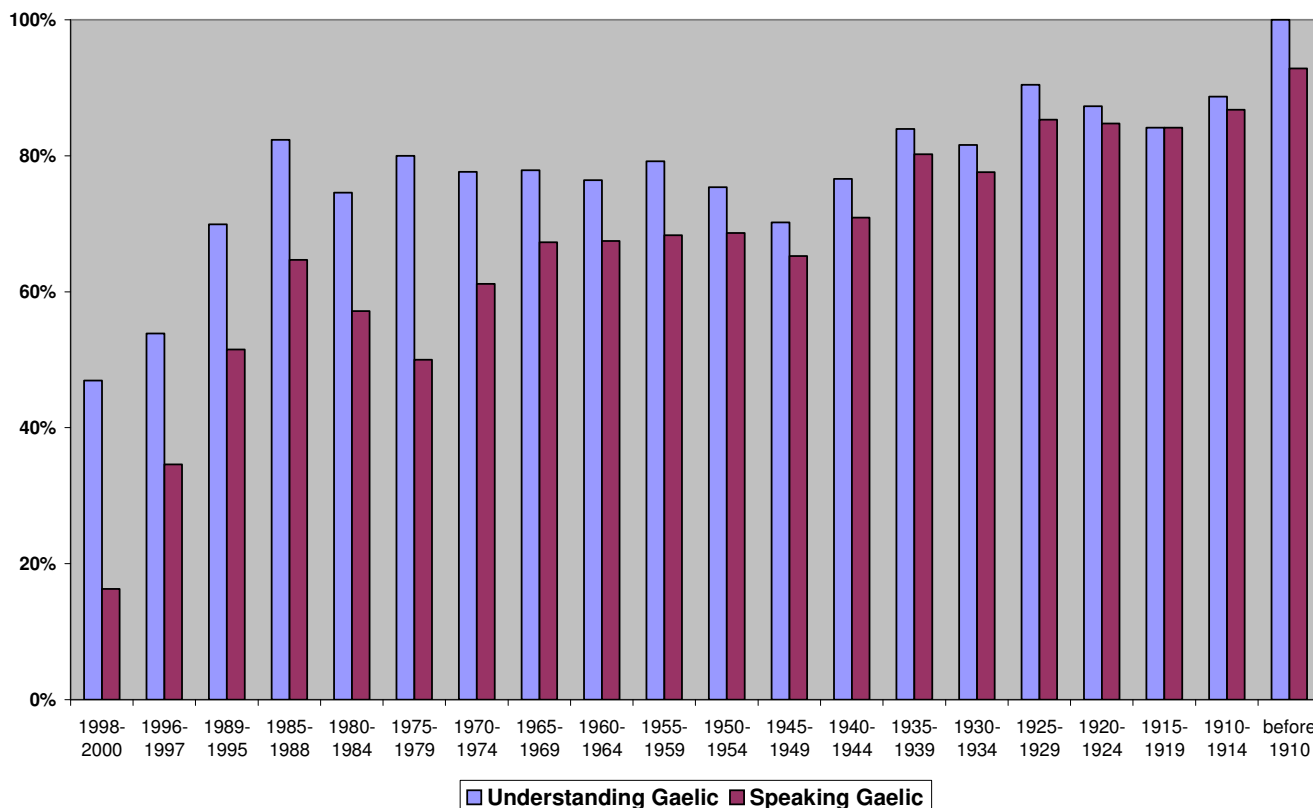


Fig. 7: Percentage of population able to understand or speak Gàidhlig and year of birth – area of Na Hearadh (Harris) according to Census 2001

Age group	2001						1991		Diff. 2001 – 1991
	Knowing ⁸ Gàidhlig		Able to speak & read Gàidhlig		Able to speak Gàidhlig		Able to speak Gàidhlig		
0-2	23	46.9 %	0	0.0 %	8	16.3 %	n/a	n/a	n/a
3-4	14	53.8 %	0	0.0 %	9	34.6 %	40	61.5 %	- 26.9 %
5-11	114	69.9 %	65	39.9 %	84	51.5 %	108	69.9 %	- 18.4 %
12-15	98	82.4 %	71	59.7 %	77	64.7 %	84	80.8 %	- 16.1 %
16-24	87	77.0 %	44	38.9 %	61	54.0 %	178	77.5 %	- 23.5 %
3-24	313	74.3 %	180	38.3 %	231	54.9 %	410	74.1 %	- 19.2 %
All ages	1,557	78.5 %	1,131	57.0 %	1,369	69.0 %	1,737	78.8 %	- 9.8 %
Difference		- 4.2 %		- 18.7 %		- 14.1 %		- 4.7 %	

Table 6: Knowledge of Gàidhlig in younger age groups in Na Hearadh (Harris) in 2001 and 1991

⁸ Persons able to understand spoken Gàidhlig and/or able to speak, read or write Gàidhlig.



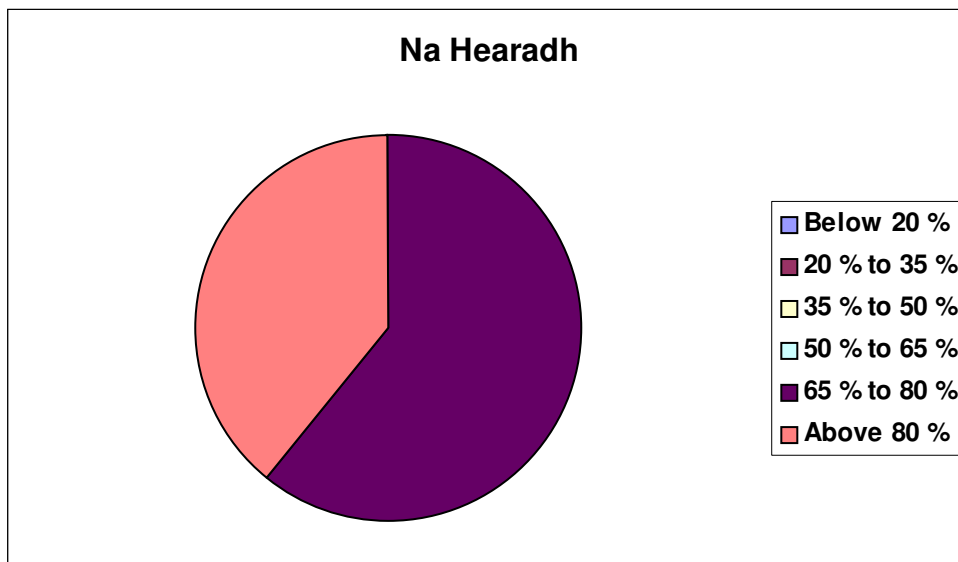


Fig. 8: Share of population living in neighbourhoods (census output areas) with different intensity of language knowledge in Na Hearadh (Harris) according to Census 2001

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 Gàidhlig (Census 2001) in Selected Primary School Catchment Areas								
Primary School(s)	“Pre-School” Age 0-4		“Primary” Age 5-11		“Secondary” Age 12-15		“Parents” Age 25-34	
	An t-Ob (Leverburgh)	8	50.0 %	29	61.7 %	32	88.9 %	38
Seilebost (Seilebost)	2	40.0 %	5	83.3 %	6	66.7 %	11	84.6 %
Cliasmol (Cliasmol)	2	50.0 %	4	57.1 %	4	57.1 %	10	47.6 %
An Tairbeart (Tarbert)	18	52.9 %	50	67.6 %	37	77.1 %	64	78.1 %
Scalpaigh (Scalpay)	7	43.8 %	26	90.0 %	19	100. %	24	92.3 %

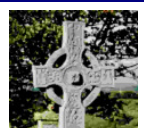
Table 7: Number and percentage of persons with knowledge of Gàidhlig in selected age groups for primary school catchment areas according to the census 2001



Generally the following conclusions may be drawn for the individual catchment areas of *Na Hearadh*:

- Pre-school children: Approximately one half of the children could understand the language. *Cròileagan* existed in *An Tairbeart*, *An t-Ob* and *Scalpaigh* at the time of the census which might have helped to sustain *Gàidhlig* knowledge in this age group. The percentage of understanding the language in 2001 at the age of 3 or 4 is comparable with the result of “able to speak” *Gàidhlig* in 1991. Percentages of *Gàidhlig* knowledge were substantially lower than those of the parental generation; the intergenerational language transition was not maintained sufficiently.
- Primary school children: The two larger primary schools provided *Gàidhlig* medium education: 26 GME children were counted in the 2000-2001 school year (out of 167 children), this means only 15.6 %. The remaining pupils experienced “bilingual” mainstream education which at least for *Seilebost* and *Scalpaigh* did succeed in producing a high percentage of language ability and/or (very probable) many of these children came from *Gàidhlig*-speaking homes. The provision of *sradagan* groups in *An Tairbeart* and *An t-Ob* might have also improved language proficiency at primary school age.
- Secondary school children: In the 2000/2001 school year in total 20 out of 57 pupils were learning *Gàidhlig* as “fluent speakers”; the rest were categorised as “learners” in the secondary stages S1 and S2. 15 pupils had gone through GME in local primary schools before entering secondary education. The remaining “fluent” children were probably mother-tongue speakers from the other smaller primary schools.
- Parents: The intensity of knowing *Gàidhlig* was generally high in all school catchments except perhaps at the small school of *Cliasmol*. As mentioned before the transfer of the language to the next generation does not seem to be sufficient to maintain *Gàidhlig* in the same intensity.

It is quite clear that the language on *Na Hearadh* is not as strongly maintained as in comparable strongholds of Cymraeg (the Welsh language) in Wales where the pre-school Welsh speaking percentage generally matches the values in the parental generation and primary school language knowledge is seldom lower than 80 %. The main differences between both language communities are of course the higher societal status of Cymraeg in Wales and the exclusive Welsh medium education in Welsh speaking areas. This unfavourable comparison holds of course true for all the other remaining *Gàidhlig* speaking “strongholds” in Scotland.



4 Future Perspectives

Census results of 2001 can also be interpreted in terms of future viability and prospects of Gàidhlig in this island community. The language viability indicator LVI⁹ is negative although considerably more favourable than in the Outer Hebrides as a whole (table 8). On the other hand the language community indicator LCI¹⁰ of *Na Hearadh* is still very high.

Area	Knowledge of Gàidhlig in 2001					
	Young age (0-24)		All ages		Difference (Language viability indicator)	Born in Scotland (Language community indicator)
<i>Na Hearadh</i> (Harris)	336	71.5 %	1,557	78.5 %	- 7.0 %	86.5 %
In comparison: <i>Na h-Eileanan an Iar</i>	57.2 %		70.4 %		- 13.2 %	75.8 %

Table 8: Intergenerational viability and Gàidhlig-speakers born in Scotland in *Na Hearadh* (Harris) compared with *Na h-Eileanan an Iar* (Western Isles) according to census data of 2001

The intensity of understanding Gàidhlig (table 15) at young age is especially high on *Scalpaigh* (almost 100 %) and lowest in *An Tairbeart* (56 %). Looking at the whole population *Scalpaigh* and *Seilebost* are the two strongholds, minimum values were recorded rather expectedly in the two main settlements of *An Tairbeart* and *An t-Ob*. Three out of 20 output areas had positive LVI values: *Sgarasta Mhòr*, *Caolas Scalpaigh* and parts of *Scalpaigh* itself. The LCI is generally higher than 80 % all other the place except at *Roghadal* and *An Tairbeart*. On the island of *Scalpaigh* and in many parts of rural *Na Hearadh* the LCI still exceeds even 90 %.

The present educational efforts do not seem to be sufficient to turn the tide and increase the number of fluent speakers in young age groups considerably. The uptake of Gàidhlig-medium education in the two larger primary schools is still comparatively low and comprises less than 20 % of the total intake (see fig. 9). This state may be improving by increasing the number of children attending the existing *cròileagan* and by a far higher profile of the language in public life. In 2003/2004 for example 36 children at the age 3 or 4 were enrolled at the Gàidhlig-medium day nurseries in *Scalpaigh*, *An Tairbeart* and *An t-Ob*. According to public consultations for a Language Management Plan of the Outer Hebrides in 2005 “of the 16 pupils in *Seilibost School*, only 5 have Gaelic. Of the 24 pupils in *Scalpay School*, 10 are fluent speakers.” Perhaps not a heartening statement but at least there was still light at the end of the tunnel!

In conclusion: Language maintenance on *Na Hearadh* based exclusively on intergenerational transmission is not completely assured. This fact is also experienced in most other rural parts of the Outer Hebrides. A few locations like the island of *Scalpaigh* keep the language far better than the population centres of *An Tairbeart* and *An t-Ob*. But still a very high proportion of islanders could at least understand Gàidhlig in 2001.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ 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.



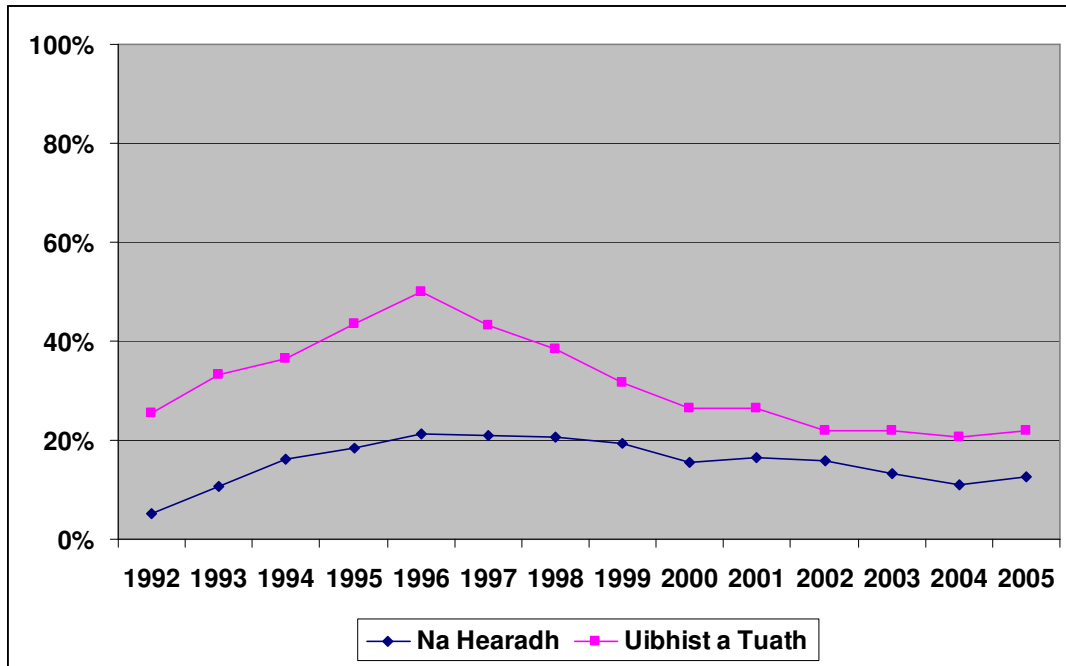


Fig. 9: Share of primary school children attending Gàidhlig-medium classes on *Uibhist a Tuath* and *Na Hearadh* (September 1992 – September 2005)¹¹

¹¹ Gaelic Dept, University of Strathclyde.



I. Supplementary Tables

Gaelic and Gaelic only in 1881 and 1891: <i>Na Hearadh</i> ¹²	Total Popula- tion	<i>Gàidhlig</i> and Eng- lish	<i>Gàidhlig</i> but no English
Census/Selected Area			
1881 (Speaking “habitually” Gaelic)	4,814	4,616	
----- Inhabited island (included in the above) ---			
<i>Na Hearadh</i> (Harris) – island proper only	3,463	3,343	
<i>Scalpaigh</i> (Scalpay)	540	498	
<i>Beàrnaraigh</i> (Berneraigh)	452	416	
<i>An Scarp</i> (Scarp)	213	213	
<i>Hiort</i> (St. Kilda)	77	77	
<i>Tarasaigh</i> (Taransay)	55	55	
<i>Easaigh</i> (Ensay)	6	6	
<i>Ceileagraigh</i> (Killegray)	6	6	
<i>Pabaigh</i> (Pabbay)	2	2	
----- Census registration districts (included in the above) –			
<i>Na Hearadh a Tuath</i> (North Harris)	2,844	2,723	
<i>Na Hearadh a Deas</i> (South Harris)	1,439	1,398	
<i>Beàrnaraigh</i> (Berneraigh)	454	448	
<i>Hiort</i> (St. Kilda)	77	77	
1891	5,024	2,413	2,382
----- Inhabited island (included in the above) ---			
<i>Na Hearadh</i> (Harris) – island proper only	3,681	1,852	1,671
<i>Scalpaigh</i> (Scalpay)	517	226	253
<i>Beàrnaraigh</i> (Berneraigh)	501	291	193
<i>An Scarp</i> (Scarp)	143	52	80
<i>Hiort</i> (St. Kilda)	71	56	15
<i>Soaigh</i> (Soay)	15	-	14
<i>Tarasaigh</i> (Taransay)	56	23	33
<i>Easaigh</i> (Ensay)	11	5	6
<i>Ceileagraigh</i> (Killegray)	8	2	6
<i>Pabaigh</i> (Pabbay)	3	-	3
<i>Sgeotasaigh</i> (Scotasay)	18	15	2
----- Census registration districts (included in the above) –			
<i>Na Hearadh a Tuath</i> (North Harris)	2,981	1,364	1,459
<i>Na Hearadh a Deas</i> (South Harris)	1,468	841	576
<i>Beàrnaraigh</i> (Berneraigh)	504	193	291
<i>Hiort</i> (St. Kilda)	71	15	56

Table 9: Number of persons speaking *Gàidhlig* in 1881 and 1891 – selected areas (civil parish, census registration districts or inhabited islands) in *Na Hearadh*

¹² Civil parish of *Na Hearadh* (Harris) only. These figures therefore include the inhabitants of *Beàrnaraigh* which is commonly included in the statistics of *Uibhist a Tuath* (North Uist). Please see Vol. 05 of this series.



Gaelic and Gaelic only between 1901 and 1971: Na Hearadh¹³	Total Popula- tion	Gàidhlig and Eng- lish	Gàidhlig but no English
Census/Selected Area			
1901	5,271	2,662	2,217
----- Inhabited island (included in the above) ---			
<i>Na Hearadh</i> (Harris) – island proper only	3,803	2,094	1,442
<i>Scalpaigh</i> (Scalpay)	587	298	240
<i>Beàrnaraigh</i> (Berneray)	524	119	362
<i>An Scarp</i> (Scarp)	160	68	71
<i>Hiort</i> (St. Kilda)	77	32	41
<i>Soaigh</i> (Soay)	16	-	15
<i>Tarasaigh</i> (Taransay)	72	30	35
<i>Easaigh</i> (Ensay)	8	4	4
<i>Ceileagraigh</i> (Killegray)	6	6	-
<i>Pabaigh</i> (Pabbay)	3	1	2
<i>Sgeotasaigh</i> (Scotasay)	15	10	5
----- Census registration districts (included in the above) –			
<i>Na Hearadh a Tuath</i> (North Harris)	3,191	1,833	1,101
<i>Na Hearadh a Deas</i> (South Harris)	1,476	677	711
<i>Beàrnaraigh</i> (Berneray)	527	120	364
<i>Hiort</i> (St. Kilda)	77	32	41
----- Electoral areas (included in the above) –			
<i>Na Hearadh a Tuath</i> (Harris North)	3,169	1,817	1,101
<i>Na Hearadh a Deas</i> (Harris South)	2,080	829	1,116
1911 <i>Na Hearadh</i> (Harris) CP	5,449	3,247	1,723
1921 <i>Na Hearadh</i> (Harris) CP	5,276	3,940	961
1931 <i>Na Hearadh</i> (Harris) CP	4,468	3,466	694
1951 <i>Na Hearadh</i> (Harris) CP	3,991	3,370	296
1961	3,284	2,823	117
----- County council electoral divisions (included in the above) –			
<i>Na Hearadh - Tuath</i> (Harris North) CCED	1,239	1,061	40
<i>Na Hearadh - Meadhon</i> (Harris Middle) CCED	941	839	45
<i>Na Hearadh - Deas</i> (Harris South) CCED	1,104	923	32
----- Inhabited island (included in the above) ---			
<i>Hiort</i> (St. Kilda)	65	-	-
1971¹⁴ <i>Na Hearadh</i> (Harris) CP	2,885	2,460	25
----- County council electoral divisions (included in the above) –			
<i>Na Hearadh - Tuath</i> (Harris North) CCED	1,065	900	*
<i>Na Hearadh - Meadhon</i> (Harris Middle) CCED	935	860	*
<i>Na Hearadh - Deas</i> (Harris South) CCED	860	690	*
----- Inhabited island (included in the above) ---			
<i>Hiort</i> (St. Kilda)	65	-	-

Table 10: Number of persons speaking Gàidhlig between 1901 and 1971 – selected areas (civil parish, census registration districts, electoral areas or inhabited islands) in Na Hearadh

¹³ Civil parish of *Na Hearadh* (Harris) only. These figures therefore include the inhabitants of *Beàrnaraigh* which is commonly included in the statistics of *Uibhist a Tuath* (North Uist). Please see Vol. 05 of this series.

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 2,458 and 2,462” and „between 21 and 29” respectively.



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

Table 11: Percentage of persons speaking Gàidhlig but no English (aged three years and over) for different age groups in island parishes of former Inverness-shire between 1891 and 1931

Number of persons and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in former County Council Electoral Divisions (Inverness-shire) (Population aged 3 years and over)						
Area	1961/71 Code	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
<i>Na Hearadh (Tuath)</i> (Harris (North) CCED)	HN	1,101 92.8 %	911 90.3 %	789 93.0 %	605 83.4 %	451 64.8 %
<i>Na Hearadh (Meadhonach)</i> (Harris (Central) CCED)	HC	884 98.0 %	872 96.4 %	779 92.8 %	641 90.7 %	494 76.4 %
<i>Na Hearadh (Deas)</i> (Harris (South) CCED) - excluding <i>Hiort</i> (St. Kilda)	HS	955 96.4 % (65)	702 91.8 % (65)	713 83.1 % (1)	613 77.7 % (-)	502 69.1 % (-)

Table 12: 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)

¹⁵ Islands of *Barraigh* (Barra), *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist), *Beinn a' Bhaoghla* (Benbecula), *Uibhist a Tuath* (North Uist), *Na Hearadh* (Harris), *An t-Eilean Sgitheanach* (Skye) and some smaller outlying islands (Scotland Census Office, 1932).



Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers ¹⁶							
Na Hearadh							
Map No	Census output area	1981		1991		2001	
01	An t-Ob (Leverburgh) a & Hiort (St. Kilda)	188	84.8 %	153	68.8 %	69	75.0 %
02	Roghadal					59	62.1 %
03	An t-Ob (Leverburgh) b	93	80.9 %	69	66.3 %	80	64.0 %
04	Sgarasta Mhòr	21	83.3 %	66	75.9 %	56	70.0 %
	Taobh Tuath	89	92.4 %				
05	Fionnsabhagh			64	85.3 %	45	61.6 %
06	Manais	61	100. %	67	73.6 %	39	68.4 %
07	Horgabost	65	87.3 %	53	74.6 %	36	58.1 %
08	Seilebost	106	100. %	84	89.2 %	73	91.3 %
09	Stocanais	126	92.3 %	86	89.5 %	61	63.5 %
10	Direcleit	163	92.8 %	141	89.7 %	129	65.2 %
	Ceann Dibig	29	71.8 %				
11	Caolas Scalpaigh	145	84.7 %	116	92.7 %	71	68.9 %
12	Aird Aiseig	111	89.1 %	99	89.1 %	61	57.0 %
13	Abhainnsuidhe	100	100. %	67	100. %	51	71.8 %
14	An Tairbeart (Tarbert) a	342	90.6 %	184	80.6 %	82	65.6 %
15	An Tairbeart (Tarbert) b					51	68.0 %
16	Tairbeart an Ear					78	70.3 %
17	Tairbeart Siar	91	77.7 %	61	73.5 %	64	65.3 %
18	Eilean Scalpaigh: Taobh Deas	148	93.4 %	142	97.2 %	102	87.9 %
19	Eilean Scalpaigh: Taobh Meadhonach	290	94.2 %	207	95.4 %	111	79.3 %
20	Eilean Scalpaigh: Taobh Tuath					57	86.4 %

Table 13: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers for the census output areas in Na Hearadh (Harris) according to data from 1981 to 2001

Na Hearadh: Gàidhlig-speaking in Age Groups (1971-2001)								
Age group	1971 ¹⁷		1981		1991		2001	
0-2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	8	16.3 %
3-4	39 (+11)	58.1 %	33	71.7 %	40	61.5 %	9	34.6 %
5-24	540 (+5)	86.8 %	589	89.5 %	370	75.8 %	222	56.2 %
25-44	486 (+1)	85.6 %	424	86.2 %	349	77.1 %	278	67.3 %
45-64	658 (+2)	94.3 %	551	89.9 %	481	84.1 %	414	71.6 %
65 +	637 (+5)	97.1 %	571	93.3 %	497	87.1 %	438	83.7 %
Total (3 years +)	2,355 (+24)	90.0 %	2,168	89.5 %	1,737	78.8 %	1,361	70.3 %
Born in Scotland	n/a	n/a	2,138	92.7 %	1,726	87.4 %	1,340	78.4 %

Table 14: Gàidhlig-speakers in different age groups in Na Hearadh (Harris) from 1971 to 2001

¹⁶ Statistical base is the population aged 3 years and over in 1981 and 1991 and the total population in 2001.

¹⁷ 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).



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>An t-Ob a</i> (Leverburgh) a	13	76.5 %	72	78.3 %	- 1.8 %	86.4 %
02	<i>Roghadal</i>	12	60.0 %	69	72.6 %	- 12.6 %	77.1 %
03	<i>An t-Ob b</i> (Leverburgh) b	29	65.9 %	93	74.4 %	- 8.5 %	84.9 %
04	<i>Sgarasta Mhòr</i>	16	80.0 %	58	72.5 %	+ 7.5 %	84.9 %
05	<i>Fionnsabhagh</i>	9	69.2 %	60	82.2 %	- 13.0 %	90.6 %
06	<i>Manais</i>	5	62.5 %	42	73.7 %	- 11.2 %	85.7 %
07	<i>Horgabost</i>	3	33.3 %	42	67.7 %	- 34.4 %	85.1 %
08	<i>Seilebost</i>	18	85.7 %	74	92.5 %	- 6.8 %	94.9 %
09	<i>Stocanais</i>	14	60.9 %	68	70.8 %	- 9.9 %	88.9 %
10	<i>Direcleit</i>	45	76.3 %	162	81.8 %	- 5.5 %	90.4 %
11	<i>Caolas Scalpaigh</i>	13	86.7 %	85	82.5 %	+ 4.2 %	87.2 %
12	<i>Aird Aiseig</i>	13	59.1 %	71	66.4 %	- 7.3 %	78.8 %
13	<i>Abhainnsuidhe</i>	11	73.3 %	56	78.9 %	- 5.6 %	90.3 %
14	<i>An Tairbeart a</i> (Tarbert) a	23	71.9 %	99	79.2 %	- 7.3 %	82.2 %
15	<i>An Tairbeart b</i> (Tarbert) b	15	75.0 %	58	77.3 %	- 2.3 %	79.3 %
16	<i>Tairbeart an Ear</i>	18	56.3 %	91	72.8 %	- 16.5 %	79.3 %
17	<i>Tairbeart Siar</i>	13	59.1 %	69	70.4 %	- 11.3 %	77.3 %
18	<i>Scalpaigh: Taobh Deas</i>	20	100. %	105	90.5 %	+ 9.5 %	95.5 %
19	<i>Scalpaigh Meadhonach</i>	32	76.2 %	120	85.7 %	- 9.5 %	90.1 %
20	<i>Scalpaigh: Taobh Tuath</i>	14	87.5 %	63	95.5 %	- 8.0 %	96.9 %

Table 15: Intergenerational viability and Gàidhlig-speakers born in Scotland in Na Hearadh (Harris) according to census data of 2001



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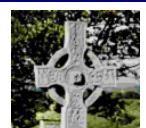
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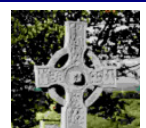
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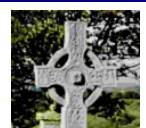
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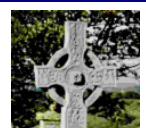
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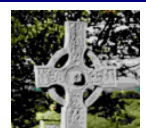
III. Some Valuable Comments about Census Information

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>Na Hearadh – Part A</i>				
Map No.	Census output area ¹⁸	Area Codes		
		1961 1971	1981 1991	2001
01	<i>An t-Ob (Leverburgh), Easaigh, Ceileagraigh (Killegray) & Hiort (St. Kilda)</i>	HS	56AD01 56AD02 56AD03 56AF15	60RJ000228
02	<i>Srannda, Borghasdal & Roghadal (Rodel)</i>	HS	56AD01	60RJ000229
03	<i>An t-Ob (Leverburgh)</i>	HS	56AD04	60RJ000193
04	<i>Taobh Tuath</i>	HS	56AF03 56AD05	60RJ000038
05	<i>Fionnsabhadh, Cuidhtinis, Ceann a' Bhàigh, Aird Mhighe & Boirsearn</i>	HS	56AF04A	60RJ000039
06	<i>Geocrab, Manais (Manish), Fleòideabhadh & Beacrabhaic</i>	HC	56AF04B	60RJ000040
07	<i>Scarasta Mhòr, Horgabost, Na Buirgh & Tarasaigh</i>	HS	56AF05 56AF06	60RJ000041
08	<i>Seilebost, Losgaintir & Horsacleit</i>	HS	56AF07	60RJ000042
09	<i>Cliuthar, Leac a' Li, Stocainis, Caolas Stocainis, Liceasto, Grosa Cleit & Collam</i>	HC	56AF08	60RJ000043
10	<i>Dìreclait, Scadabhadh, Drinsiadair, Cadha, Greosabhadh, Miabhaig, Ceann Dibig & Plocrapol</i>	HC	56AF09 56AF10	60RJ000044
11	<i>Caolas Scalpaigh, Urgha Beag, Carragraich, Reinigeadal & Oban</i>	HN	56AF11	60RJ000045
12	<i>Aird Asaig, Bun Abhainn Eadarra, Màraig, Aird a' Mhulaidh, Scaladal & Bàgh Bhiogadail</i>	HN	56AF12	60RJ000046
13	<i>Miabhaig, Abhainn Suidhe, Gobhaig, Cliasmol, Huisinis, Beitearsaig & An Scarp</i>	HN	56AF13 56AF14	60RJ000195
14	<i>An Tairbeart (Tarbert)</i>	HN	56AF01A	60RJ000201

Table A-1: List of locations within individual census output areas and official numbers for different census dates for *Na Hearadh* (Harris) – 1961-2001 – Part A

¹⁸ 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.



Census Output Areas in Na Hearadh – Part B				
Map No.	Census output area	Area Codes		
		1961 1971	1981 1991	2001
15	An Tairbeart (Tarbert)	HN	56AF01A	60RJ000202
16	An Tairbeart an Ear	HN	56AF01B	60RJ000036
17	An Tairbeart Siar & Leacainn	HN	56AF02	60RJ000037
18	Scalpaigh bho Dheas	HC	56AE01	60RJ000035
19	Scalpaigh Meadhonach	HC	56AE02	60RJ000199
20	Scalpaigh bho Thuath	HC	56AE02	60RJ000200

Table A-2: List of locations within individual census output areas and official numbers for different census dates for Na Hearadh (Harris) – 1961-2001 – Part B

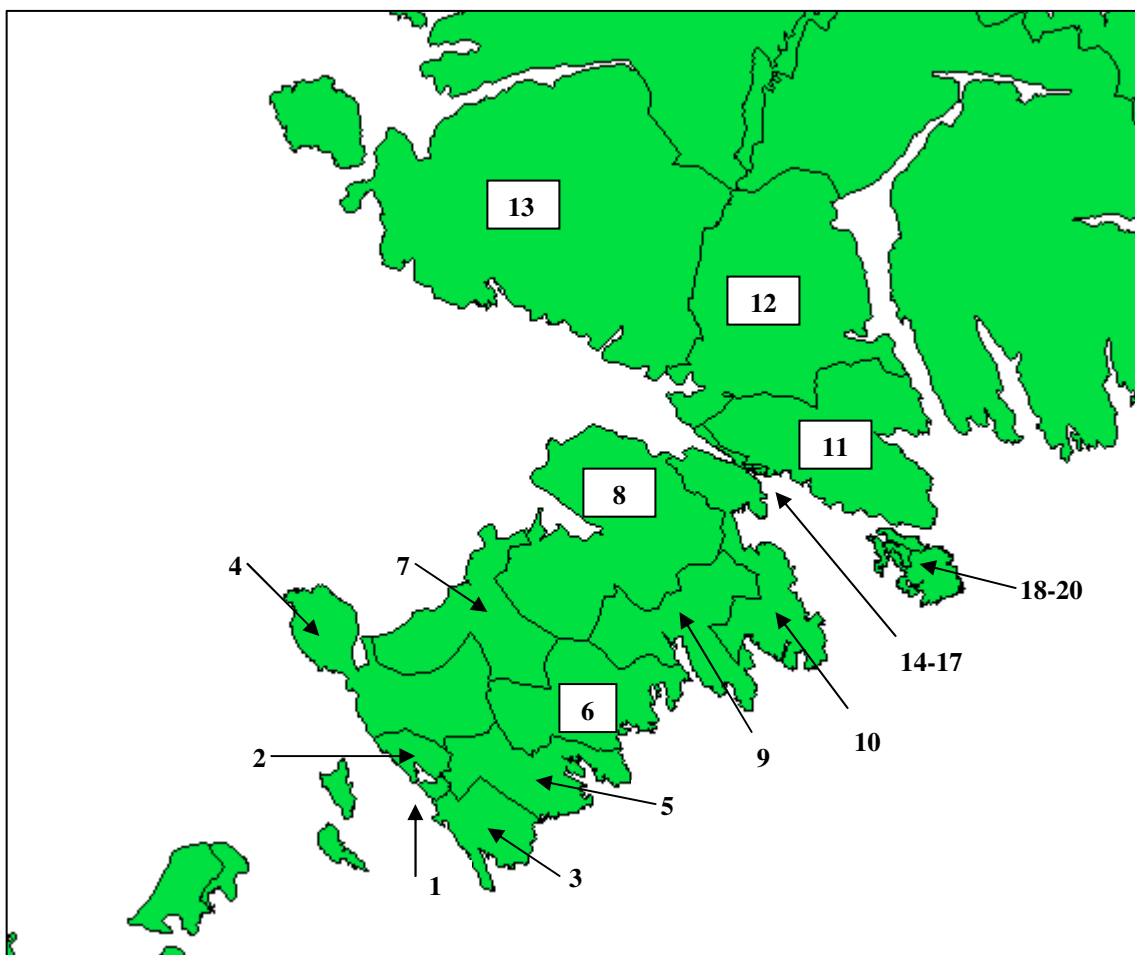


Fig. 10: Overview map of census output areas for Na Hearadh (Isle of Harris) - numbers are provided in tables A-1 and A-2¹⁹

¹⁹ Digital boundaries courtesy of Ordnance Survey as part of the Geography Products provided by GROS for the 2001 census



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VII. List of Abbreviations

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

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



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