

# **Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Studies<sup>1</sup>**

## **Vol. 07: *Eilean Leòdhais: Na Lochan* (Isle of Lewis: Lochs)**

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**2<sup>nd</sup> Edition**

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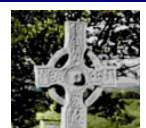
### **Executive Summary**

This publication is part of a series dealing with local communities which were predominantly Gaelic-speaking at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> 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 7 of this series is concerned with the south-western part of Lewis. Considering the past developments in the Lochs district this part of the Isle of Lewis can no longer be considered per se as a stronghold of the language. Here the retreat of the language is still widespread and this fact remained unimpeded at a considerable rate since 2001. This development may be explained partly by the inadequate educational provision for Gaelic in the past. These circumstances, however, may improve in future. After all Lochs is the most depressing example of the decline of Gaelic in rural Lewis.

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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 20<sup>th</sup> 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



## Table of Contents

<i>Executive Summary</i>	1
<i>Foreword to the First Edition</i>	2
<i>Foreword to the Second Edition</i>	2
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	2
<i>Table of Contents</i>	3
<i>1 Introduction</i>	4
<i>2 The Historical Background</i>	5
2.1 From Victorian times until the Second World War (Census 1881-1931)	5
2.2 Developments in the late 20th century (Census 1951–2001)	8
2.3 Development of literacy in Gàidhlig between 1971 and 2001	11
<i>3 The Situation of 2001 in Focus</i>	12
3.1 General overview: Gàidhlig language capabilities in 2001	12
3.2 Children with knowledge of Gàidhlig in primary school catchments	14
<i>4 Future Perspectives</i>	16
<i>I. Supplementary Tables</i>	17
<i>II. Literature and Data Sources</i>	22
<i>III. Some Valuable Comments about Census Information</i>	33
<i>IV. List of Census Output Areas with Numbers and Placenames</i>	35
<i>V. List of Tables</i>	37
<i>VI. List of Figures</i>	38
<i>VII. List of Abbreviations</i>	39
<i>Index of the Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Studies</i>	40



## 1 Introduction

This study focuses on the south-easterly district of *Leòdhas* (Lewis) which is aptly called *Na Lochan* (Lochs) because of its many freshwater lochs and sea lochs which penetrate deeply into the island. Most of the population lives in small settlements near or along the main road between the island capital *Steòrnabhagh* (Stornoway) and *Na Hearadh* (Harris) in the South. A district of its own is the remote peninsula of *Pairc* (Park) a hilly area only connected by a small side road from *Baile Ailean* (Ballalan). Major “centre” of the district is the settlement of *Liùrbost* (Leurbost) in the North where many inhabitants earn their living as “commuters” working in nearby *Steòrnabhagh* with its administrative centre and some industrial facilities. The remaining population of the district depends on a very flexible patchwork of mostly part-time occupations including of course crofting, fish farming and public services.

Like all parts of *Na h-Eileanan an Iar* (Western Isles) *Gàidhlig* has been the main or even dominant language of this community until quite recently. Nowadays part of the inter-island local authority this district like the whole of *Leòdhas* had been administered by the County Council of Ross & Cromarty until local government reorganisation in 1975. The majority of the approximately 1,800 inhabitants are Protestants. This even today means a quieter Sunday life than normally experienced on the mainland and a prominent place of *Gàidhlig* in the everyday life of the church congregations.

With this background in mind the following short chapters look into the historical development of the use of *Gàidhlig* in *Na Lochan* from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> 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.

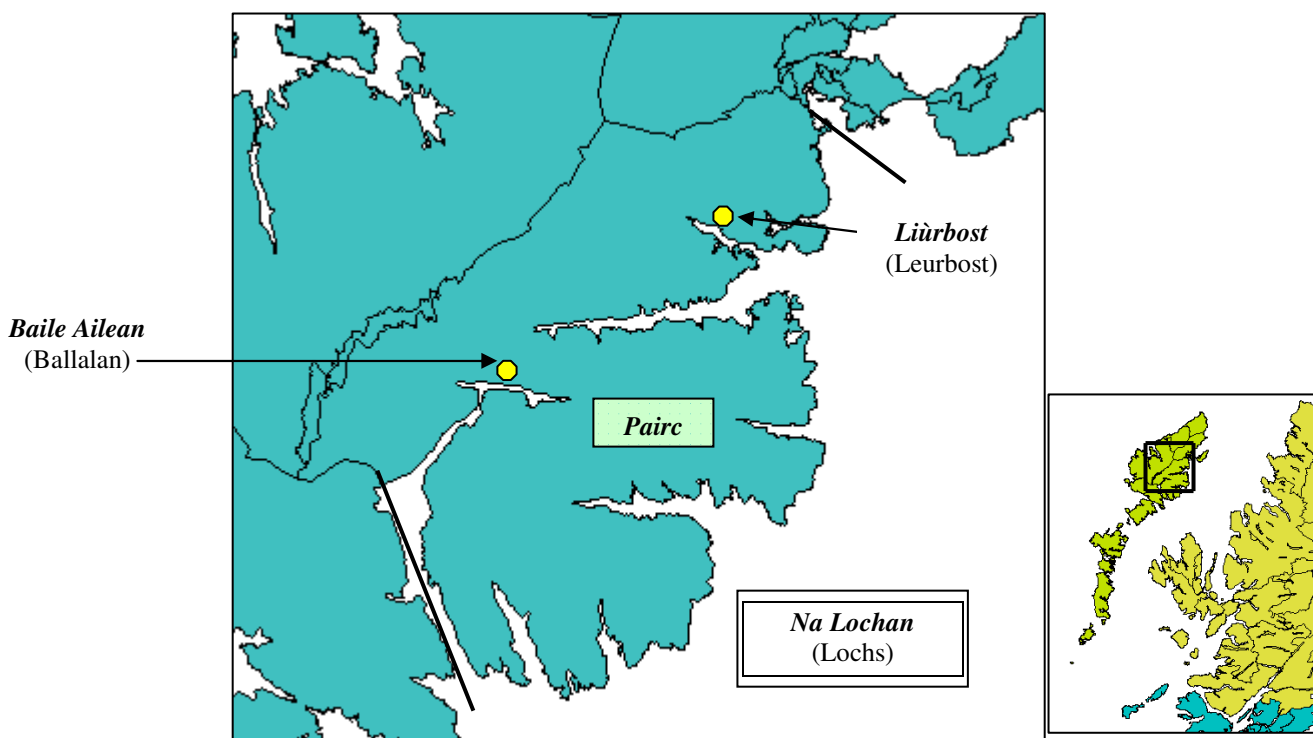


Fig. 1: Overview map of area under investigation<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Digital boundaries courtesy of Ordnance Survey as part of the Geography Products provided by GROS for the 2001 census.



## 2 The Historical Background

The *Gàidhlig* language has been a dominant cultural factor for the whole of *Leòdhas* (Lewis). In remote districts like *Na Lochan* this was of course no different. The *Old Statistical Account of Scotland* (1797) informed plainly about the cultural heritage of the local inhabitants: “*The Gaelic language is their mother tongue.*” Even the dramatic Clearances could not destroy the linguistic balance. Vast areas of “deer forests” were almost empty of people but the crofting townships were still bursting with life and *Gàidhlig* culture.

In figure 2 the temporal evolution of the percentage of *Gàidhlig* speakers is depicted for the south-eastern part of the island called *Na Lochan* (Lochs). A very dramatic decline of *Gàidhlig*-speaking incidence has occurred in the parish of *Na Lochan* since 1981, far more intensive than in the other rural parts of *Leòdhas*, notably the more westerly parish of *Uig* (Vol. 8 of this series).

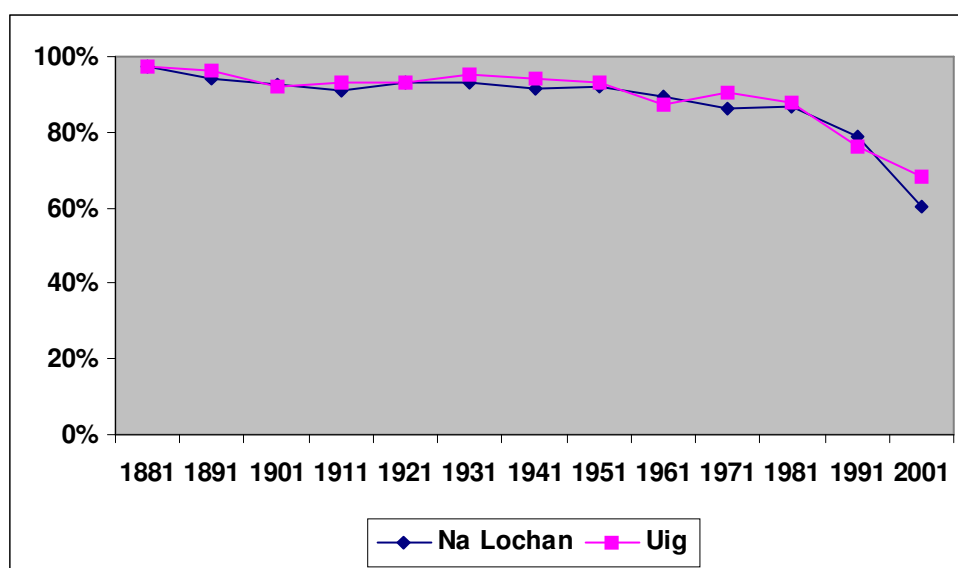


Fig. 2: *Gàidhlig*-speakers (3 years and over) as percentage of total population between 1881 and 2001 – civil parishes of *Na Lochan* (Lochs) and neighbouring *Uig*<sup>3</sup>

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

From 1881 onwards a language question was included in the decadal population census exercises in Scotland. The census enumeration returns about “Gaelic-speakers” in 1881 and 1891 saw practically all inhabitants of this part of *Leòdhas* as *Gàidhlig*-speaking, the majority did not speak English at all. Details of these census results are investigated in the following section.

<i>Na Lochan</i>						
Subject \ Census	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931
<i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers (3 years +)	4,389	4,417	4,310	4,326	4,059	3,637
% of total population	97.8 %	94.1 %	91.1 %	91.1 %	92.3 %	94.5 %

Table 1: Number of *Gàidhlig*-speakers (3 years and over) in *Na Lochan* (Lochs) and percentage of total population speaking *Gàidhlig* during 1881-1931

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



Number of persons and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in selected districts of Na Lochan – 1881 – 1901 <sup>4</sup>					
Enumeration district(s)	All persons speaking Gàidhlig			Monolingual share of all Gàidhlig-speakers	
	1881 <sup>5</sup>	1891	1901	1891	1901
<i>Liùrbost</i> (Leurbost)	635 <b>97.1 %</b>	584 <b>96.1 %</b>	614 <b>96.2 %</b>	459 <b>78.6 %</b>	191 <b>31.1 %</b>
<i>Ranais</i> (Ranish)	412 <b>98.3 %</b>	401 <b>88.7 %</b>	469 <b>94.0 %</b>	394 <b>98.3 %</b>	277 <b>59.1 %</b>
<i>Crosbost</i> (Crossbost)	2,450 <b>97.7 %</b>	331 <b>94.8 %</b>	311 <b>96.3 %</b>	284 <b>85.8 %</b>	131 <b>42.1 %</b>
<i>Grimsiadair &amp; Àirinis</i> (Grimshader & Arnish)		132 <b>86.3 %</b>	164 <b>92.7 %</b>	125 <b>94.7 %</b>	77 <b>47.0 %</b>
<i>Cleascro &amp; Acha Mòr</i> (Cleascro & Achmore)		195 <b>95.6 %</b>	189 <b>93.1 %</b>	157 <b>80.5 %</b>	37 <b>19.6 %</b>
<i>Lacasaidh &amp; Ceos</i> (Laxay & Keose)		439 <b>97.8 %</b>	370 <b>96.6 %</b>	356 <b>81.1 %</b>	87 <b>23.5 %</b>
<i>Gearraidh a’ Bhàird &amp; Cearsiadair</i> (Garyvard & Kershader)		342 <b>94.5 %</b>	334 <b>95.2 %</b>	267 <b>78.1 %</b>	188 <b>56.3 %</b>
<i>Marbhaig &amp; Crò Mòr</i> (Marvig & Cromore)		642 <b>94.6 %</b>	669 <b>91.0 %</b>	357 <b>55.6 %</b>	271 <b>40.5 %</b>
<i>Leumrabhagh</i> (Lemreway)		248 <b>95.0 %</b>	272 <b>94.4 %</b>	121 <b>48.8 %</b>	152 <b>55.9 %</b>
<i>Airidh a’ Bhruaich &amp; Alainn</i> (Arivruaich & Aline)		137 <b>95.1 %</b>	132 <b>94.3 %</b>	44 <b>31.1 %</b>	1 <b>0.8 %</b>
<i>Èisgean &amp; Maol Chadha a’ Ghàrraidh</i> <sup>6</sup> (Eishken & Mulhagery)		85 <b>90.4 %</b>	78 <b>85.7 %</b>	44 <b>51.8 %</b>	31 <b>39.7 %</b>
<i>Grabhair</i> (Gravir)	367 <b>99.7 %</b>	368 <b>94.6 %</b>	362 <b>87.0 %</b>	284 <b>77.2 %</b>	256 <b>70.7 %</b>
<i>Baile Ailean</i> (Balallan)	519 <b>97.0 %</b>	502 <b>96.4 %</b>	439 <b>91.1 %</b>	356 <b>70.9 %</b>	78 <b>17.8 %</b>

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

The management of the census in those days was not an easy exercise in rural situations such as on an Hebridean island. In 1891 the enumerator Kenneth Mackinnon for example was concerned with the south-western part of the parish. His notes make interesting reading: “*The Enumeration District allotted to me is the ‘Park Deer Forest’, consisting of four gamekeeper’s houses viz. the Kenmore House, Valmus, Mullhagary, & Lochshell Head. The district is calculated to be 50 miles in extent. It is bounded on the West and North by Lochseaforth, South by the Minch, on the East by Lochshell. No road of any description leads from any of these houses. The district is very extensive and rough and uncommonly mountainous. The delivery and collecting could not be achieved in one day owing to its extent*” (Scotland Census Office, 1892). Census information generally is very detailed for the years 1881, 1891 and 1901. Table 2 provides an overview of the indi-

<sup>4</sup> Values of Gàidhlig-speakers above 50 % (and monolingual shares exceeding 10 %) are denoted in bold figures.

<sup>5</sup> The 1881 census only recorded persons which were speaking “habitually” Gàidhlig.

<sup>6</sup> Figures include inhabitants of *Na h-Eileanan Mòra* (Shiant Islands).



vidual strength of the language in different parts of the parish (see also table 9 in the annex). Keeping in mind that visitors and children below the age of 3 years were all included in the total population base the realistic percentages should read near 100 % in almost all places.

A look at the original census forms of 1891<sup>7</sup> illustrates that even the high figures in the census reports were essentially underestimates of the real strength of *Gàidhlig*. Taking the enumeration district of *Ranais, Grimsiadair & Àirinis* (Ranish, Grimshader & Arnish) as an example the difference is obvious. Whereas the official census returns reported 604 persons speaking *Gàidhlig* (88.2 % of the total population) the figures of the usually resident population (aged three years or over) reveal a share of 92.4 % (Duwe, 2005). The population share would have been even higher if some dubious oversights concerning language abilities of children had been avoided: “A substantial number of young persons aged between 3 and 7 had no “G” or “G&E” marked on their enumeration sheets. 25 of those “non-Gaelic speaking” persons in 1891 were traced in the 1901 census. All were found to be *Gàidhlig*-speaking and 7 were even monolinguals at this time! Therefore it cannot be assumed that the low percentage of *Gàidhlig*-speakers in this age group had been a genuine enumeration result in 1891.” Just a handful of other residents (19 individuals) had no “G” (Gaelic only) or “G&E” (Gaelic and English speaking) marks on their registration sheets. Two lighthouse keepers at *Àirinis* and the local school teacher had the “privilege” to lead the only non-*Gàidhlig* speaking families in the district.

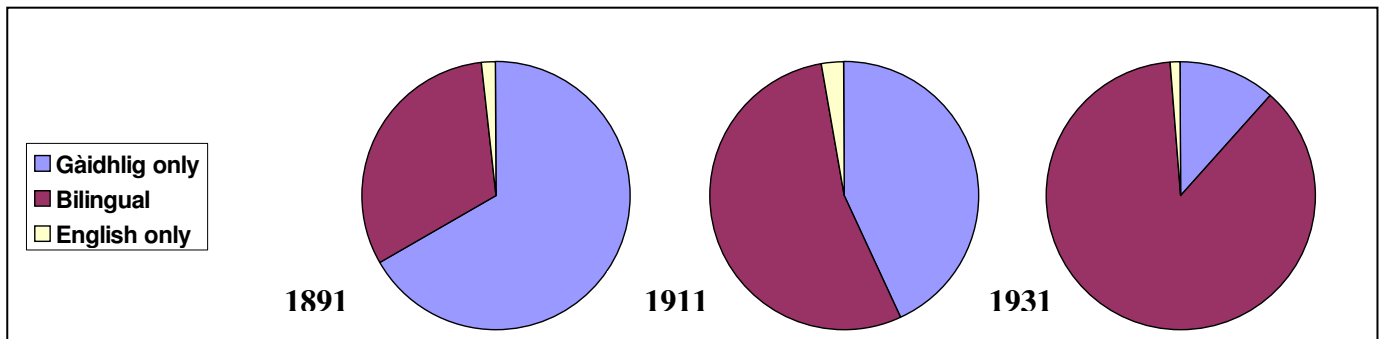
The effects of the education policy since 1872, however, would change things during the forthcoming decades (see Vol. 03 of this series for details). Despite strong public protests this simple ignorance should stay for a few decades to come. In 1883 the Crofters Commission stated clearly “We think that the discouragement and neglect of the native language in the education of Gaelic-speaking children, which has hitherto so largely influenced the system practised in the Highlands, ought to cease, and that a knowledge of the language ought to be considered one of the primary qualifications of every person engaged in the carrying out of the national system of education in Gaelic-speaking districts, whether as school inspectors, teachers, or compulsory officers.” In 1888 the much appraised Gaelic Society of Inverness was equally scathing in its criticism: “Much has been said and written upon the teaching of Gaelic in schools, but as yet little has been done by the Education Department.... In regard to the teaching of Gaelic in the junior standards, we are sorry to see from the latest bluebook that the Highland Inspectors are still opposed – bitterly and unreasonably – to the teaching of the language in schools, and to testing the children’s knowledge and intelligence therein. ... The restriction of the Gaelic-speaking pupil teacher to the teaching of the infants and lower standards practically shuts out male teachers, and, as a consequence, is scarcely even a half remedy, should it be taken advantage of. The whole question of Gaelic teaching, and of the supply and education of teachers for the Highlands, is one that must once, earnestly and honestly, be grappled with.” Eventually in 1918 the new Education Bill was amended with a so-called “Gaelic Clause” (compare Vol. 05 of this series) but with no significant effect on everyday school life in “Gaelic-speaking areas”. The use of a device named *maide-chrochaidh* (a stick with a cord) was commonly used to stigmatise and physically to punish children speaking *Gàidhlig* in the schools. Its use was reported as late as the 1930s in *Leòdhas* (MacKinnon, 1974).

As late as the 1940s a teacher in a *Leòdhas* school reported: “Gaelic may be used as an oral medium of instruction. One and a half hours per week are given to Gaelic as a special subject. The medium of the Gaelic lesson is English. Religious instruction is given in both languages. The Gaelic text-books in present use are not at all suitable. ... Children are not now punished for talking Gaelic in class. The teaching of English begins on admission to school (five years).” This information came from a school with all pupils being Gaelic-speakers (John L. Campbell, 1945)! The island as a whole remained overwhelmingly *Gàidhlig*-speaking in those days but the psychological impact of this anti-Gaelic attitude in the educational system on those pupils in

<sup>7</sup> 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.



later life was immense. *Gàidhlig* was considered as of secondary importance and quite a number of parents actively discouraged the use of the language in their own homes. In those days, however, the overall strength and social importance of *Gàidhlig* in remote communities like *Na Lochan* was intensive enough to ensure language acquisition also outside home and school. This factor was weakening only after the Second World War.



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

The *Gàidhlig* spoken in *Na Lochan*, or generally in *Leòdhas* was generally acclaimed by many at that time as something special or, even the purest in Scotland. Carl Borgstrøm pointed out in his linguistic study on the dialects of the Outer Hebrides in the late 1930s. “...*The differences of dialect are not so great as to impede mutual understanding between speakers from any parts of the Hebrides, except in the case of some special words..... The dialects of Lewis are in many points rather different from other Gaelic dialects; and even English spoken by Lewismen, as very peculiar and easily distinguishable from other dialects*” (Borgstrøm, 1940). The influence of English in the homes of most islanders remained very limited in those days. This may be borne in mind when looking at the high percentages of monoglot *Gàidhlig*-speaking children in pre-school ages between 3 and 4. Table 10 shows respective percentages for the whole of *Leòdhas* ranging from 74.4 % in 1891 to 63.0 % in 1931. The small decrease might be explained by stronger anglicisation forces in the town of *Steòrnabhagh*, the situation in rural districts such as *Na Lochan* will have in all probability remained staunchly *Gàidhlig*. During the decades between 1891 (94.1 %) and 1931 (94.5 %) the whole share of *Gàidhlig*-speakers of the total population remained essentially static (table 1).

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

The aftermath of the war had severe effects on the economy of the Scottish islands as a whole. Depopulation was a widespread phenomenon which did not spare *Na Lochan*. Within a time span of forty years (1931-1971) the district lost almost 50 % of its population. The number of *Gàidhlig*-speakers saw a similar decrease in the area. However, the relative strength of the language remained at a comparably high level (table 3). Consulting census results for the two County Council Electoral Divisions (CCEDs) in the area (*Pairc* and *Na Lochan*) the overall knowledge of the language was only slightly decreasing until 1981 (table 12). The underlying anglicisation factors were afterwards to prove very powerful, in addition to the well-known impacts of the educational sector the invading presence of English language radio and television in every home became ever more effective to question the effectiveness of language transition for *Gàidhlig* as a mother or first language. The continuing out-migration of especially young *Gàidhlig*-speakers was matched with an ever increasing in-migration of monoglot English-speakers from other parts of Scotland or the UK as a whole. In combination with the low profile of *Gàidhlig* in public life essentially no real incentive existed for incomers to learn the local language. With the increased pos-



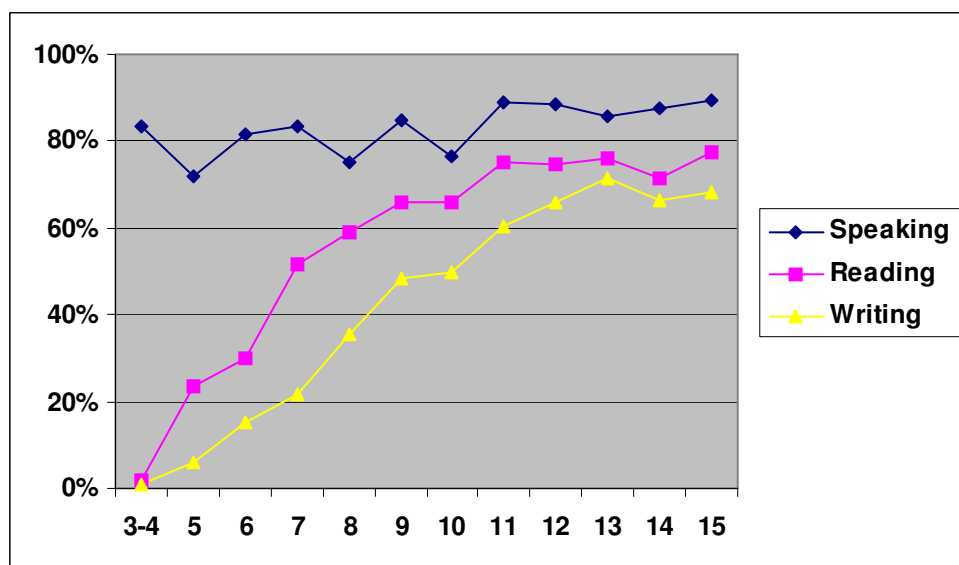


sibility of mixed language marriages more and more couples choose English as language of the home because both parents spoke it. These negative factors were more or less the same in all districts of the *Gaidhealtachd* in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The question remains why the language community of *Na Lochan* fared far worse than other comparable parts of the islands like nearby *Uig* to the west or *Uibhist a Deas* (South Uist) in the south?

<i>Na Lochan</i>						
Subject \ Census	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
<i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers (3 years +)	2,875	2,329	1,960	1,911	1,493	1,097
% of total population	92.4 %	94.8 %	90.5 %	86.4 %	74.9 %	60.5 %

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

As late as the 1950s *Na Lochan* remained overwhelmingly *Gàidhlig*-speaking in all generations. The report on *Gàidhlig*-speaking children in Highland schools (Scottish Council for Research in Education, 1961) counted 230 of 250 primary school pupils (92 %) as first language speakers in the school year 1957/58. Fortunately the Ross & Cromarty Education Scheme started in the 1960s shortly after its predecessor in Inverness-shire (see Vol. 03 of this series) and provided a far more positive approach towards the teaching of the language and usage of *Gàidhlig* as medium of instruction for mother tongue speakers. Until 1981 the percentages of *Gàidhlig*-speakers remained more or less the same (table 3). In 1981 all census output areas in the area were over 80 % *Gàidhlig*-speaking. The percentages in localities varied between *Leumrabhagh* (97.5 %) and *Gearraidh a' Bhàird* (80.5 %) both on the peninsula of *Pairc* (table 13).



**Fig. 4: Percentage of children able to speak, read or write *Gàidhlig* in different age groups in 1981 – *Leòdhas a Deas* (South Lewis) including *Na Lochan* and *Uig***

After 1981 the reduction in the incidence of *Gàidhlig*-speaking was pronounced until 2001. Most dramatic were the decreases in *Gàidhlig*-speaking ability in the age groups below 45 (see fig. 5). Contrary to other traditional heartlands of the language movements to support (or even produce new) young Conditions were to change, however. When the bilingual project (Murray & Morrison, 1984) in schools started in 1975 only two out of six primary schools in the area were involved: *Liùrbost* (Leurbost) and



*Cnocanduibh* (Knockianduie). The profile of the language in *Na Lochan* was already deteriorating so fast that it was not felt necessary (or possible) to include the four remaining primary schools from the start. Nevertheless literacy in the language was successfully reached at primary school age as is shown in detailed census results of 1981 (fig. 4).

Educational provisions for *Gàidhlig*-speakers were of limited scope and consistency in *Na Lochan*. As late as 1993 the first (and so far) only *Gàidhlig*-medium unit was established in the small school of *Cnocanduibh*. The remaining pupils in the district remained at the whims of the bilingual educational system which proved to be more and more inadequate to cope with the increased number of monolingual English-speakers entering the schools year after year. Also the provision of *Gàidhlig*-speaking playgroups was underrepresented in *Na Lochan*. It took a long period until the first *cròileagan* could start in *Baile Ailean* around 2000 where the local authority lent a helping hand. At least in this respect it is not at all surprising to notice the especially weak position of *Gàidhlig* in this once stronghold.

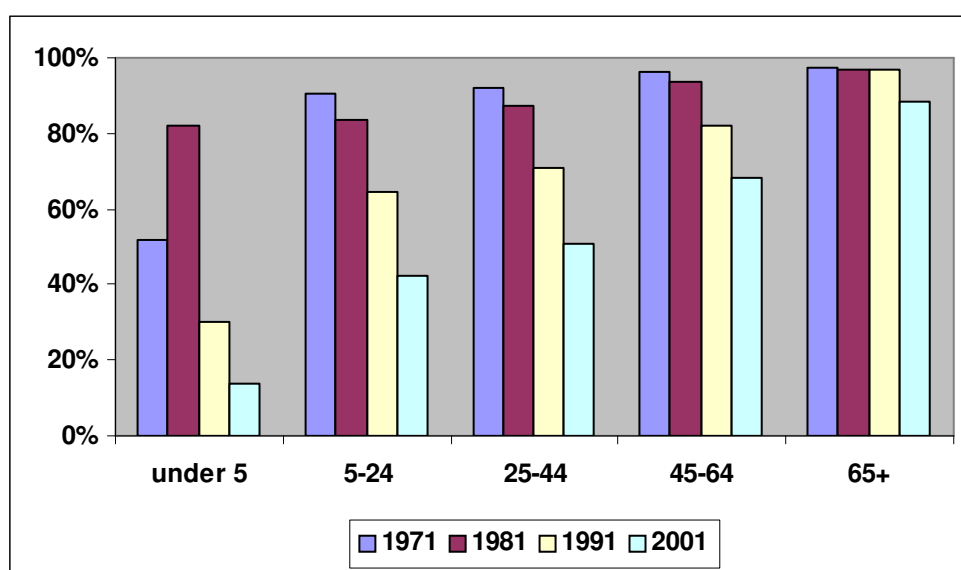


Fig. 5: Percentage of *Gàidhlig*-speakers in different age groups between 1971 and 2001 – Area of *Na Lochan* (Lochs)<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Under 5: *Gàidhlig* abilities in the age group 3-4 until 1991, in 2001 in all age groups 0-4.



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

Different aspects of language knowledge became available from 1971 onwards: Census questions were then introduced on the ability to read or write Gàidhlig (see tables 4 and 5 below). Generally literacy in the language was generally higher and comparable with those of other Protestant areas of the Outer Hebrides. However a slight decrease of reading ability (83 % to 74 %) was recorded between 1971 and 2001. This phenomenon is especially evident (fig. 6) in the age groups of 16-24 and 25-44 and may be seen as an additional indicator pointing to less frequent use of Gàidhlig in recent years.

	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
<i>Na Lochan (Lochs)</i>	1,610	1,508	1,124	819	83.2 %	78.9 %	75.3 %	74.3 %

Table 4: Number of people able to read Gàidhlig and Gàidhlig readers as a percentage 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
<i>Na Lochan (Lochs)</i>	855	1,054	721	585	44.2 %	55.2 %	48.3 %	53.0 %

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

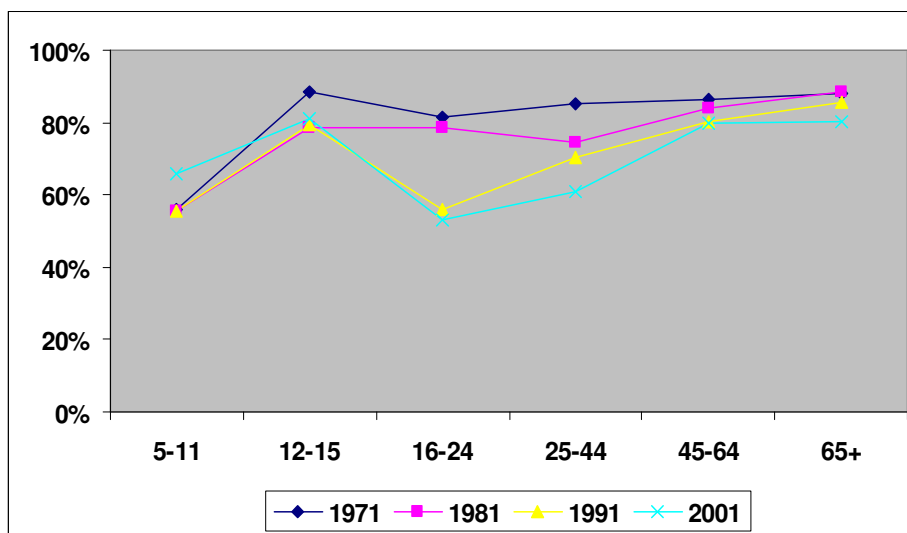


Fig. 6: Persons able to read Gàidhlig as a percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in Na Lochan in different age groups (1971-2001)



### 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 will be 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 concerning *Na Lochan*:

- The percentages of the population knowing or speaking *Gàidhlig* are strongly increasing with age especially from the generation born after 1930. Primary and pre-school generations are well underrepresented (fig. 7) and make up only for a minority of the children in the district.
- Table 6 shows a strong decrease of language abilities in all age groups since 1991. The possibility of language maintenance is very weak with only 56 % of those aged between 3 and 24 understanding spoken *Gàidhlig* compared with over 70 % in the population as a whole.
- Looking at the small area statistics (table 13) *Gàidhlig* speaking ability was lowest in parts of *Liùrbost* (33 %) and highest in *Leumrabhagh* (78 %) in the *Pairc* district. Those understanding at least spoken *Gàidhlig* ranged between 42.6 % (*Liùrbost*) and 86.4 % (*Fidigeairraidh*).
- Figure 8 provides an insight on the relative strength of local language communities. The composition of language communities was more heterogeneous in *Na Lochan* than in other rural parts of the Outer Hebrides. Only around three quarters of the population lived in neighbourhoods where more than 65 % knew the language.
- Literacy levels were still high in *Na Lochan* in 2001 as it was traditionally so in Protestant *Gàidhlig* speaking areas. Over fifty percent of speakers could read and write the language and more than 70 % were able to read *Gàidhlig*.
- Children under 3 years of age did show language intensities of 12.1 % (speaking) and 32.8 % (understanding). The total of 19 children able to understand *Gàidhlig* was concentrated in the settlements of *Pairc* (6) and the villages between *Ceos* and *Baile Ailean* (9).
- The new category of understanding *Gàidhlig* recorded 180 respondents (9.9 %) in *Na Lochan* in addition to those 1,104 (60.9 %) who were able to speak the language.

*Na Lochan* must generally be considered as the most anglicized community in rural *Leòdhas* with only a few local spots of relative language strength like *Leumrabhagh* and *Ceos* remaining.



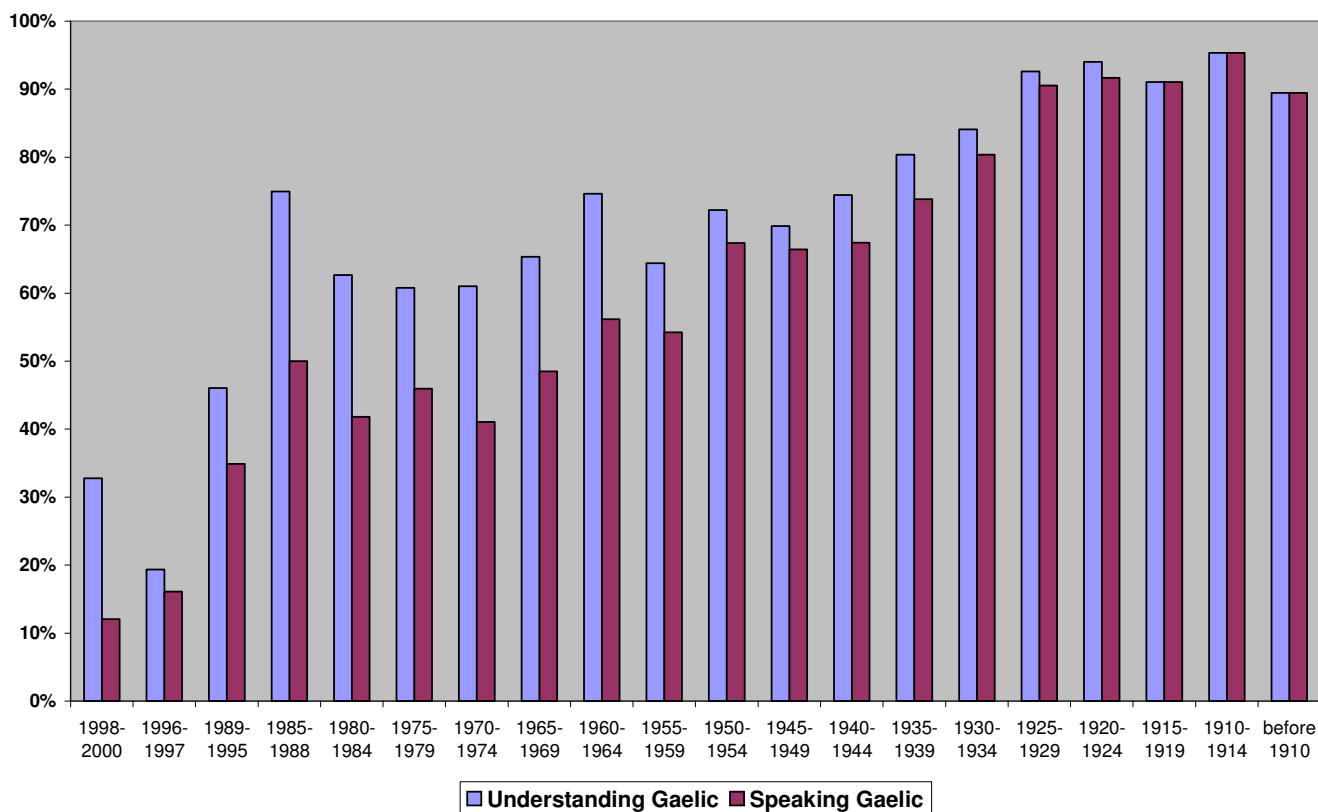


Fig. 7: Percentage of population able to understand or speak Gàidhlig and year of birth – area of Na Lochan (Lochs) according to Census 2001

Age group	2001						1991		Diff. 2001 – 1991
	Knowing <sup>9</sup> Gàidhlig		Able to speak & read Gàidhlig		Able to speak Gàidhlig		Able to speak Gàidhlig		
0-2	19	32.8 %	0	0.0 %	7	12.1 %	n/a	n/a	n/a
3-4	6	19.4 %	0	0.0 %	5	16.1 %	13	30.2 %	- 14.1 %
5-11	58	46.0 %	29	23.0 %	44	34.9 %	74	47.7 %	- 12.8 %
12-15	63	75.0 %	34	40.5 %	42	50.0 %	87	73.1 %	- 23.1 %
16-24	87	61.7 %	45	31.9 %	62	44.0 %	149	72.3 %	- 28.3 %
3-24	214	56.0 %	108	24.5 %	153	40.1 %	323	61.8 %	- 21.7 %
All ages	1,284	70.8 %	819	45.1 %	1,104	60.9 %	1,493	77.2 %	- 16.3 %
Difference		- 14.8 %		- 20.6 %		- 20.8 %		- 15.4 %	

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

<sup>9</sup> Persons able to understand spoken Gàidhlig and/or able to speak, read or write Gàidhlig.



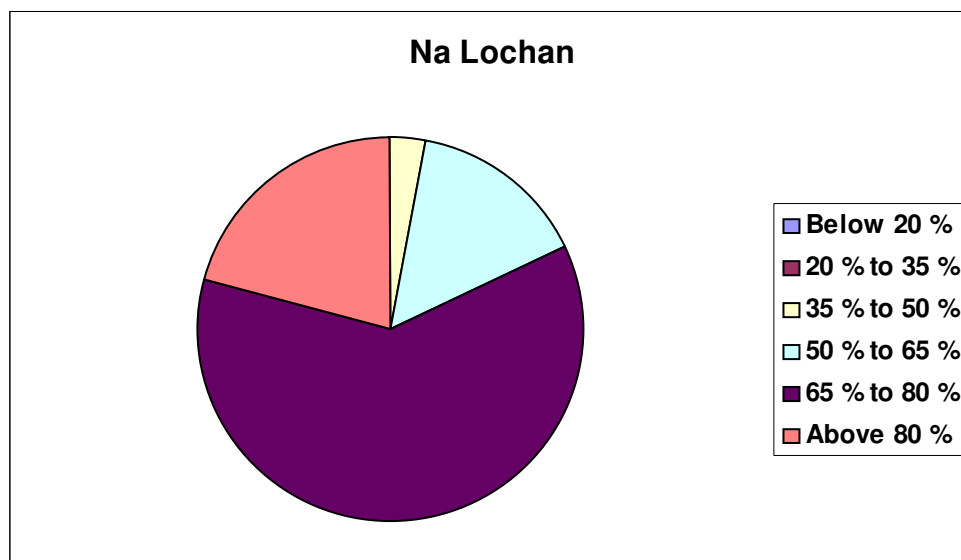


Fig. 8: Share of population living in neighbourhoods (census output areas) with different intensity of language knowledge in *Na Lochan* (Lochs) according to Census 2001

### 3.2 Children with knowledge of Gàidhlig in primary school catchments

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*. The 2001 census results render it possible to calculate numbers and percentages for different age groups in such a way to attribute them to pre-school age (0-4), primary school age (5-11) and secondary school age (12-15). As an additional indicator a column is provided in table 7 with the age group of 24-35 which is meant to represent the language abilities of possible parents.

Knowledge of <i>Gàidhlig</i> (Census 2001) in Selected Primary School Catchment Areas								
Primary School(s)	“Pre-School” Age 0-4		“Primary” Age 5-11		“Secondary” Age 12-15		“Parents” Age 25-34	
	<i>Baile Ailean</i> (Balallan)	6	28.6 %	14	51.9 %	8	72.7 %	27
<i>Pairc</i> (Pairc)	7	30.4 %	10	38.5 %	12	85.7 %	25	56.8 %
<i>Cnocanduibh</i> (Knockianduie)	7	63.6 %	15	71.4 %	9	64.3 %	21	91.3 %
<i>Liurbost</i> (Leurbost)	5	14.7 %	19	36.5 %	34	75.6 %	51	57.3 %

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

Interpreting the results of table 7 the following statements may be provided:

- Pre-school children: With the notable exception of the catchment of *Cnocanduibh* primary school only a minority of pre-school children know any *Gàidhlig*. The influence of the *cròile-*



gan in *Baile Ailean* (just opened in 2000) could not yet have a marked influence on the results in this area.

- **Primary school children:** Until 2001 only one primary school in the area provided GME: *Cnocanduibh* had 11 GME children on its roll in the 2000/2001 school year (out of 112 children in *Na Lochan*). It means a tiny 9.8 % were educated through the medium of *Gàidhlig*. The remaining pupils experienced “bilingual” mainstream education with seemingly limited success. No *sradagan* existed in the district to bolster the number of primary school children who had at least some knowledge of the traditional community language.
- **Secondary school children:** In secondary stages S1 and S2 a few of the 22 secondary pupils at *Liùrbost* school were learning *Gàidhlig* as “fluent speakers”, the rest as “learners”. As the language was a compulsory subject in the first two secondary stages census results were relatively high in this age group.
- **Parents:** The share of parents knowing some *Gàidhlig* was consistently higher than the respective values in pre-school and primary school ages. The relative strength of the language in the different school catchments was also mirrored in this age group with *Cnocanduibh* coming out as the most “*Gàidhlig*” of all the primary school communities.

Generally these figures underline the weak intergenerational language transmission in the area and they also prove the less than satisfactory state of the language in the educational provision in the district of *Na Lochan* (see fig. 9 for details).

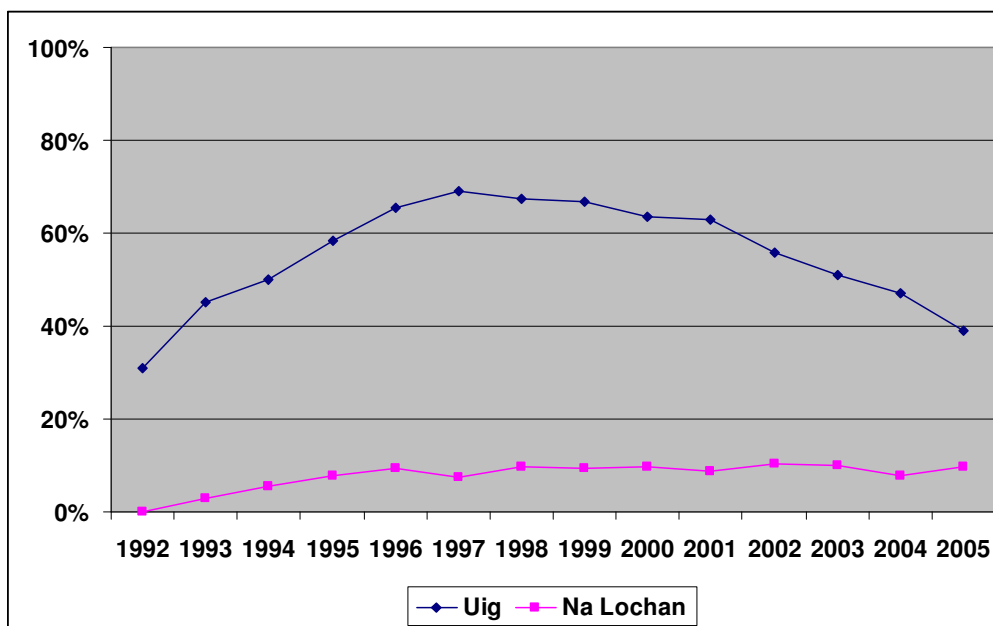


Fig. 9: Share of primary school children attending *Gàidhlig*-medium classes in *Na Lochan* and *Uig* (September 1992 – September 2005)<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Gaelic Dept, University of Strathclyde.



## 4 Future Perspectives

The 2001 census results may be used as basis from which to predict future developments in the Gàidhlig-speaking community. The language viability indicator LVI<sup>11</sup> is extremely negative in *Na Lochan*, only every second person aged less than 25 years understands spoken Gàidhlig opposed to over 70 % in the whole population. This figure is even less encouraging than in *Na h-Eileanan an Iar* (Western Isles) as a whole. The language community indicator LCI<sup>12</sup>, however, is still high due to the predominance of the knowledge of Gàidhlig in the older generations (table 8).

Area	Knowledge of Gàidhlig in 2001					
	Young age (0-24)		All ages		Difference (Language viability indicator)	Born in Scotland (Language community indicator)
<b><i>Na Lochan (Lochs)</i></b>	233	53.0 %	1,284	70.8 %	<b>- 17.8 %</b>	<b>79.1 %</b>
<i>In comparison: Na h-Eileanan an Iar</i>		57.2 %		70.4 %	<b>- 13.2 %</b>	<b>75.8 %</b>

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

Locally differences are especially evident. At young age *Liùrbost* for example is the relatively weakest place with only 15 % of those aged less than 24 being able to understand spoken Gàidhlig. On the other hand Gàidhlig is still very strong amongst the young in *Leumrabhagh* and around *Ceos* and *Lacasaidh*. The only positive LVI value is found at *Leumrabhagh*. In large parts of the area negative LVI values even exceed 20 %. Local LCI percentages vary considerably between *Ceos* (92 %) and parts of *Liùrbost* (44 %).

Since the 2001 census some changes have occurred in the educational sector in the district. The single GMU in *Na Lochan* has moved to *Baile Ailean* primary school after the closure of the small school at *Cnocanduibh*. This in effect enlarged the catchment area for GME in the area significantly. In addition a new GMU was established in 2003 in *Pairc* primary school in response to parental demand. In the pre-school sector things improve slowly. The Gàidhlig-medium day nursery at *Baile Ailean* for example attracted 5 children in the 2003/2004 session. So in the end some things change after all in *Na Lochan*.

**In conclusion: In the area of *Na Lochan* the retreat of the language is still widespread and this fact remains unimpeded at a considerable rate. Educational provision in the past was far from satisfactory which may improve in future. After all *Na Lochan* is the most depressing example of the decline of Gàidhlig in rural *Leòdhas*.**

<sup>11</sup> 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.

<sup>12</sup> 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.





## I. Supplementary Tables

Gaelic and Gaelic only between 1881 and 1971: <i>Na Lochan</i>	Total Popula- tion	Gàidhlig and Eng- lish	Gàidhlig but no English
Census/Selected Area			
<b>1881 (Speaking “habitually” Gaelic)</b> ----- Inhabited island and villages (included in the above) --- <i>Na h-Eileanan Mòra</i> (Shiant Islands) <i>Baile Ailean</i> (Balallan) <i>Vi</i> <i>Grabhair</i> (Gravir) <i>Vi</i> <i>Liùrbost</i> (Leurbost) <i>Vi</i> <i>Ranais</i> (Ranish) <i>Vi</i>	4,489 6 535 368 654 412	4,389 6 519 367 635 412	
<b>1891</b> ----- Inhabited island and villages (included in the above) --- <i>Na h-Eileanan Mòra</i> (Shiant Islands) <i>Baile Ailean</i> (Balallan) <i>Vi</i> <i>Crosbost</i> (Crossbost) <i>Vi</i> <i>Grabhair</i> (Gravir) <i>Vi</i> <i>Liùrbost</i> (Leurbost) <i>Vi</i> <i>Ranais</i> (Ranish) <i>Vi</i>	4,676 8 521 349 389 608 452	1,168 - 146 47 84 125 7	3,249 7 356 284 284 459 394
<b>1901</b> ----- Inhabited island and villages (included in the above) --- <i>Na h-Eileanan Mòra</i> (Shiant Islands) <i>Baile Ailean</i> (Balallan) <i>Vi</i> <i>Crosbost</i> (Crossbost) <i>Vi</i> <i>Grabhair</i> (Gravir) <i>Vi</i> <i>Liùrbost</i> (Leurbost) <i>Vi</i> <i>Ranais</i> (Ranish) <i>Vi</i> ----- Electoral areas (included in the above) – <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) <i>Pairc</i> (Park)	4,733 8 482 323 416 638 499 2,712 2,021	2,533 - 361 80 108 423 192 1,585 948	1,777 7 78 131 256 191 277 878 899
<b>1911</b> <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) CP	4,750	2,409	1,917
<b>1921</b> <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) CP	4,396	3,318	741
<b>1931</b> <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) CP	3,849	3,210	427
<b>1951</b> <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) CP	3,111	2,705	170
<b>1961</b> ----- Electoral areas (included in the above) – <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) CCED <i>Pairc</i> (Park) CCED	2,456 1,543 913	2,263 1,522 741	66 42 24
<b>1971</b> <sup>13</sup> ----- Electoral areas (included in the above) – <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) CCED <i>Pairc</i> (Park) CCED	2,167 1,530 635	1,935 1,370 565	25 * *

**Table 9: Number of persons speaking Gàidhlig between 1881 and 1971 – selected areas (civil parish, vil-  
lages, electoral areas or inhabited islands) in *Na Lochan***

<sup>13</sup> Due to rounding of figures to the nearest 0 and 5 it is impossible to provide exact “Gaelic only” numbers in 1971. The fig-  
ures in the table should be read as “between 1,931 and 1,939” and “between 21 and 29” respectively.



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

**Table 10: 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**



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

**Table 11: Percentage of persons speaking Gàidhlig but no English (aged three years and over) for different age groups in island parishes of former Ross & Cromarty according to census data from 1891 to 1931**

Number of persons and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in former County Council Electoral Divisions (Ross & Cromarty) (Population aged 3 years and over)						
Area	1961/71 Code	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
<i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs CCED)	HN	1,564 97.8 %	1,385 94.5 %	1,414 90.4 %	1,135 79.3 %	821 62.6 %
<i>Pairc</i> (Park CCED)	HS	765 99.2 %	575 92.7 %	497 88.8 %	358 70.6 %	276 62.2 %

**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) according to census data from 1961 to 2001**

<sup>14</sup> Island of *Leòdhas* (Lewis) with civil parishes of *Barabhas* (Barvas), *Na Lochan* (Lochs), *Steòrnabhagh* (Stornoway) and *Uig* (Scotland Census Office, 1932).



Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers <sup>15</sup>							
Na Lochan							
Map No	Census output area <sup>16</sup>	1981		1991		2001	
01	<i>Liùrbost (Leurbost) 1 a</i>	225	92.2 %	89	76.5 %	67	58.8 %
02	<i>Liùrbost (Leurbost) 1 b</i>			77	70.3 %	57	61.3 %
03	<i>Liùrbost (Leurbost) 2 a</i>	228	92.7 %	191	83.2 %	94	61.8 %
04	<i>Liùrbost (Leurbost) 2 b</i>					18	33.3 %
05	<i>Fidigearraidh</i>	302	86.5 %	146	85.1 %	90	72.0 %
06	<i>Crosbost</i>			128	74.3 %	93	61.6 %
07	<i>An t-Achadh Mòr (Achmore)</i>	200	89.3 %	135	71.0 %	96	60.0 %
08	<i>Ceos</i>	207	93.2 %	84	74.6 %	79	68.7 %
09	<i>Lacasaidh</i>			95	93.3 %	103	75.7 %
10	<i>Baile Ailean (Ballalan) a</i>	252	89.6 %	87	85.6 %	69	47.3 %
11	<i>Baile Ailean (Ballalan) b</i>			104	82.8 %	60	57.1 %
12	<i>Airidh a'Bhruaich</i>	57	80.3 %	36	50.7 %	29	52.7 %
13	<i>Leumrabhagh</i>	118	97.5 %	73	88.1 %	53	77.9 %
14	<i>Grabhair</i>	74	87.1 %	57	64.4 %	44	53.7 %
15	<i>Crò Mòr</i>	140	94.0 %	108	81.5 %	84	68.3 %
16	<i>Gearraidh a'Bhàird</i>	108	80.6 %	84	63.4 %	68	50.4 %

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

Na Lochan: Gàidhlig-speaking in Age Groups (1971-2001)								
Age group	1971 <sup>17</sup>		1981		1991		2001	
<b>0-2<sup>18</sup></b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7	12.1 %
<b>3-4</b>	25 (+14)	52.0 %	37	82.2 %	13	30.2 %	5	16.1 %
<b>5-24</b>	450 (+3)	90.6 %	485	83.6 %	310	64.6 %	148	42.2 %
<b>25-44</b>	340 (+1)	92.2 %	393	87.1 %	339	71.1 %	226	50.9 %
<b>45-64</b>	625 (+2)	96.5 %	497	93.4 %	401	82.2 %	360	68.4 %
<b>65 +</b>	495 (+5)	97.1 %	500	96.7 %	440	96.7 %	358	88.6 %
<b>Total (3 years and over)</b>	1,935 (+25)	97.4 %	1,911	89.8 %	1,493	77.2 %	1,097	60.9 %
<b>Born in Scotland</b>	n/a	n/a	1,877	92.2 %	1,463	82.0 %	1,057	68.4 %

Table 14: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in different age groups in Na Lochan (Lochs) according to data from 1971 to 2001

<sup>15</sup> Statistical base is the population aged 3 years and over for 1981 and 1991 and the total population in 2001.

<sup>16</sup> 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.

<sup>17</sup> 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).

<sup>18</sup> Information only available since 2001.



Map No.	Output Area	Knowledge of Gàidhlig in 2001					
		Young age (0-24)		All ages		Difference (Language viability indicator)	Born in Scotland (Language community indicator)
01	<i>Liùrbost 1a</i> (Leurbost) 1 a	17	50.0 %	78	68.4 %	- 18.4 %	76.4 %
02	<i>Liùrbost 1 b</i> (Leurbost) 1 b	10	52.6 %	68	73.1 %	- 20.5 %	83.5 %
03	<i>Liùrbost 2 a</i> (Leurbost) 2 a	21	58.3 %	112	73.7 %	- 15.4 %	80.0 %
04	<i>Liùrbost 2 b</i> (Leurbost) 2 b	3	15.0 %	23	42.6 %	- 27.6 %	43.8 %
05	<i>Fidigearraidh</i>	15	71.4 %	108	86.4 %	- 15.0 %	89.7 %
06	<i>Crosbost</i>	26	61.9 %	108	71.5 %	- 9.6 %	79.7 %
07	<i>An t-Achadh Mòr</i> (Achmore)	13	44.8 %	104	65.0 %	- 20.2 %	78.7 %
08	<i>Ceos</i>	25	73.5 %	92	80.0 %	- 6.5 %	91.8 %
09	<i>Lacasaidh</i> (Laxay)	26	68.4 %	112	82.4 %	- 14.0 %	88.6 %
10	<i>Baile Ailean a</i> (Ballalan) a	19	44.2 %	95	65.1 %	- 20.9 %	72.4 %
11	<i>Baile Ailean b</i> (Ballalan) b	13	61.9 %	71	67.6 %	- 5.7 %	76.2 %
12	<i>Airidh a'Bhruaich</i>	11	52.4 %	35	63.6 %	- 11.2 %	72.9 %
13	<i>Leumrabhagh</i>	4	100. %	54	79.4 %	+ 20.6 %	88.1 %
14	<i>Grabhair</i>	8	47.1 %	52	63.4 %	- 16.3 %	82.5 %
15	<i>Crò Mòr</i>	9	47.4 %	91	74.0 %	- 26.6 %	77.5 %
16	<i>Gearraidh a'Bhàird</i>	13	31.0 %	81	60.0 %	- 29.0 %	63.7 %

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



## II. Literature and Data Sources

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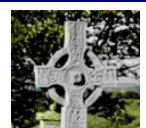
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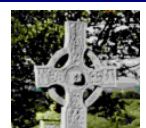
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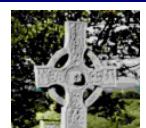
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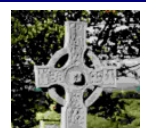
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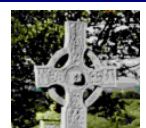
### III. Some Valuable Comments about Census Information

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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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” changed to “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 Lochan</i>				
Map No.	Census output area <sup>19</sup>	Area Codes		
		61-71	1981-91	2001
01	<i>Liùrbost</i> (Leurbost)	LL	56AG01A	60RJ000047
02	<i>Liùrbost</i> (Leurbost)	LL	56AG01B	60RJ000048
03	<i>Liùrbost</i> (Leurbost)	LL	56AG02	60RJ000203
04	<i>Liùrbost</i> (Leurbost)	LL	56AG02	60RJ000204
05	<i>Fidigearraidh</i> (Fidigarry), <i>Crosbost &amp; Ranais</i>	LL	56AG10A	60RJ000196
06	<i>Crosbost &amp; Ranais</i>	LL	56AG10B	60RJ000058
07	<i>An t-Achadh Mòr</i> (Achmore), <i>Rubha Airinis</i> , <i>Grimsiadair &amp; Rathad nan Lochan</i>	LL	56AG11	60RJ000059
08	<i>Ceos &amp; Glib Cheois</i>	LL	56AG09A	60RJ000056
09	<i>Lacasaidh</i> (Laxay) & <i>Loidse Shobhail</i>	LL	56AG09B	60RJ000057
10	<i>Baile Ailean</i> (Balallan)	LL	56AG08A	60RJ000054
11	<i>Baile Ailean</i> (Balallan)	LL	56AG08B	60RJ000055
12	<i>Airidh a' Bhruaich</i> (Arivruaich), <i>Eisgein</i> , <i>Ceann Siophoirt &amp; Ath Linne</i>	LP	56AG03	60RJ000049
13	<i>Leumrabhagh</i> (Lemreway), <i>Oransaidh &amp; Taobh a' Ghlinne</i>	LP	56AG04	60RJ000050
14	<i>Grabhair</i> (Gravir) & <i>Taobh a' Ghlinne</i>	LP	56AG05	60RJ000051
15	<i>Crò Mòr</i> , <i>Marbhaig &amp; Torasdaidh</i>	LP	56AG06	60RJ000052
16	<i>Gearraidh a' Bhàird</i> , <i>Tabost</i> , <i>Cearsiadair</i> , <i>Cabharstadh &amp; Sildinis</i>	LP	56AG07	60RJ000053

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

<sup>19</sup> Placenames are given according to official information by the Ordnance Survey and used in modern maps. The placenames in the Outer Hebrides do have officially *Gàidhlig* names. „English“ versions are only used in addition for major settlements. Therefore the old anglicised names are provided in table A-1 for a few prominent locations only.



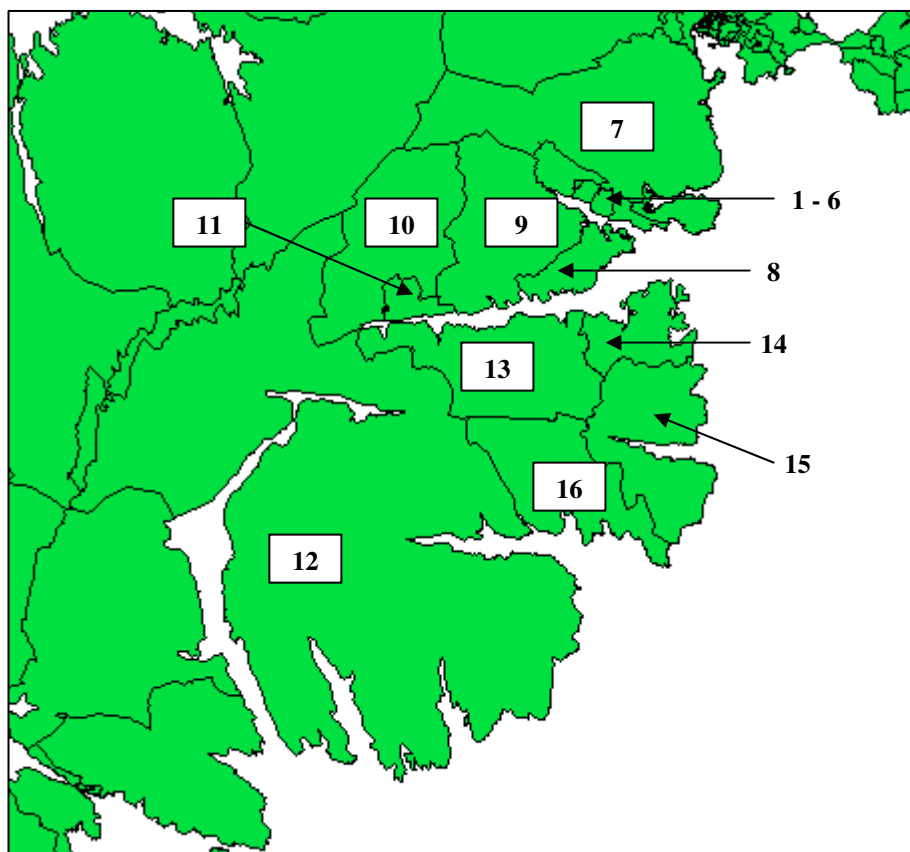


Fig. 10: Overview map of census output areas for *Na Lochan* (Lochs) - numbers are provided in table A-1<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Digital boundaries courtesy of Ordnance Survey as part of the Geography Products provided by GROS for the 2001 census



## V. List of Tables

### REPORT

1	Number of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers in <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) and percentage of total population speaking <i>Gàidhlig</i> during 1881-1931	5
2	Number of persons speaking <i>Gàidhlig</i> and all <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers as share of population in <i>Na Lochan</i> according to local census data from 1881 to 1901	6
3	Number of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers in <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) and percentage of total population speaking <i>Gàidhlig</i> during 1951-2001	9
4	Number of people able to read <i>Gàidhlig</i> and <i>Gàidhlig</i> readers as a percentage of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers (1971-2001)	11
5	Number of people able to write <i>Gàidhlig</i> and <i>Gàidhlig</i> writers as a percentage of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers (1971-2001)	11
6	Knowledge of <i>Gàidhlig</i> in younger age groups in <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) in 2001 and 1991	13
7	Number and percentage of persons with knowledge of <i>Gàidhlig</i> in selected age groups for primary school catchment areas according to the census 2001	14
8	Intergenerational viability and <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers born in Scotland in <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) compared with <i>Na h-Eileanan an Iar</i> (Western Isles) according to census data of 2001	16
9	Number of persons speaking <i>Gàidhlig</i> between 1881 and 1971 – selected areas (county council electoral divisions or inhabited islands) in <i>Na Lochan</i>	17
10	Number of persons speaking <i>Gàidhlig</i> for the area of the former Lewis District Council in 1961 – results are exclusive of returns from the Small Burgh of Stornoway	18
11	Percentage of persons speaking <i>Gàidhlig</i> 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	19
12	Number of persons speaking <i>Gàidhlig</i> and all <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers as share of population (aged three years and over) for pre-1975 county council electoral divisions according to census data from 1961 to 2001	19
13	Number and percentage of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers for the census output areas in <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) between 1981 and 2001	20
14	Number and percentage of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers in different age groups in <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) according to data from 1971 to 2001	20
15	Intergenerational viability and <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers born in Scotland in <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) according to census data of 2001	21

### ANNEXES

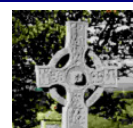
A-1	List of locations within individual census output areas and official numbers for different census dates for <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) – 1961-2001	35
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## VI. List of Figures

### REPORT

1	Overview map of area under investigation	4
2	Gàidhlig-speakers as percentage of population aged 3 and over between 1881 and 2001 – Civil parishes of <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) and neighbouring <i>Uig</i>	5
3	Share of population speaking Gàidhlig and/or English in the study area according to census results in 1891, 1911 and 1931	8
4	Percentage of children able to speak, read or write Gàidhlig in different age groups in 1981 – <i>Leòdhas a Deas</i> (South Lewis) including <i>Na Lochan</i> and <i>Uig</i>	9
5	Percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in different age groups between 1971 and 2001 – Area of <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs)	10
6	Persons able to read Gàidhlig as a percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in <i>Na Lochan</i> in different age groups (1971-2001)	11
7	Percentage of population able to understand or speak Gàidhlig and year of birth – area of <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) according to Census 2001	13
8	Share of population living in neighbourhoods (census output areas) with different intensity of language knowledge in <i>Na Lochan</i> (Lochs) according to Census 2001	14
9	Share of primary school children attending Gàidhlig-medium classes in <i>Na Lochan</i> and <i>Uig</i> (September 1992 – September 2005)	15
10	Overview map of census output areas for <i>Na Lochan</i>	36



## VII. List of Abbreviations

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

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



## Index of the Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Studies

	<u>1<sup>st</sup> Edition</u>	<u>2<sup>nd</sup> Edition</u>
<b>Vol. 01</b> <i>Àird nam Murchan &amp; Loch Abar an Iar</i> (Ardnamurchan & West Lochaber)	October 2003	August 2005
<b>Vol. 02</b> <i>Eilean Bharraigh</i> (Isle of Barra)	November 2003	September 2005
<b>Vol. 03</b> <i>Uibhist a Deas &amp; Beinn a'Bhaoghla</i> (South Uist & Benbecula)	December 2003	November 2005
<b>Vol. 04</b> <i>Iar Thuath Chataibh</i> (North-West Sutherland)	January 2004	November 2005
<b>Vol. 05</b> <i>Uibhist a Tuath</i> (North Uist)	January 2004	December 2005
<b>Vol. 06</b> <i>Na Hearadh</i> (Harris)	February 2004	January 2006
<b>Vol. 07</b> <i>Eilean Leòdhais: Na Lochan</i> (Isle of Lewis: Lochs)	March 2004	January 2006
<b>Vol. 08</b> <i>Eilean Leòdhais: Uig &amp; Carlabhagh</i> (Isle of Lewis: Uig & Carloway)	April 2004	-
<b>Vol. 09</b> <i>Taobh Siar Rois: Loch Bhraoin &amp; Geàrrloch</i> (Wester Ross: Lochbroom & Gairloch)	June 2004	-
<b>Vol. 10</b> <i>Taobh Siar Rois: A'Chomraich, Loch Carrann &amp; Loch Aillse</i> (Wester Ross: Applecross, Lochcarron & Lochalsh)	July 2004	-
<b>Vol. 11</b> <i>An t-Eilean Sgitheanach: Trondairnis, Diùirinis &amp; Minginis</i> (Isle of Skye: Trotternish, Duirinish & Minginish)	July 2004	-
<b>Vol. 12</b> <i>An t-Eilean Sgitheanach: Port Rìgh, An Srath &amp; Slèite</i> (Isle of Skye: Portree, Strath & Sleat)	August 2004	-
<b>Vol. 13</b> <i>Eilean Leòdhais: An Taobh Siar &amp; Nis</i> (Isle of Lewis: Westside & Ness)	April 2004	-
<b>Vol. 14</b> <i>Eilean Leòdhais: Am Bac &amp; An Rubha</i> (Isle of Lewis: Back & Point)	May 2004	-
<b>Vol. 15</b> <i>Eilean Leòdhais: Steòrnabhagh</i> (Isle of Lewis: Stornoway)	May 2004	-
<b>Vol. 16</b> <i>Ile, Diùra &amp; Colbhasa</i> (Islay, Jura & Colonsay)	August 2004	-
<b>Vol. 17</b> <i>Gleann Comhann, Lios Mòr &amp; Àird Chatain</i> (Glencoe, Lismore & Ardchattan)	September 2004	-
<b>Vol. 18</b> <i>An t-Oban &amp; Latharna a Deas</i> (Oban & South Lorn)	October 2004	-
<b>Vol. 19</b> <i>An Gearasdan &amp; Loch Abar an Ear</i> (Fort William & East Lochaber)	October 2004	-
<b>Vol. 20</b> <i>Muile, Tiriodh &amp; Colla</i> (Mull, Tiree & Coll)	July 2004	-
<b>Vol. 21</b> <i>Bàideanach, Srath Spè, Nàrann &amp; Bràighean Mhàrr</i> (Badenoch, Strathspey, Nairn & Braes of Mar)	December 2004	-
<b>Vol. 22</b> <i>Cataibh an Ear &amp; Gallaibh</i> (East Sutherland & Caithness)	April 2005	-
<b>Vol. 23</b> <i>Inbhirnis &amp; Loch Nis</i> (Inverness & Loch Ness)	May 2005	-
<b>Vol. 24</b> <i>Taobh Sear Rois</i> (Easter Ross)	March 2005	-
<b>Vol. 25</b> <i>Dal Riada &amp; Cinn Tìre</i> (Mid Argyll & Kintyre)	June 2005	-
<b>Vol. 26</b> <i>Comhal, Siorrachd Bhòid &amp; Dùn Breatainn</i> (Cowal, County of Bute & Dumbarton)	June 2005	-
<b>Vol. 27</b> <i>Siorrachd Pheairt &amp; Sruighlea</i> (Perthshire & Stirling)	August 2005	-

