

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

## Vol. 09: *Taobh Siar Rois: Loch Bhraoin & Geàrrloch* (Wester Ross: Lochbroom & Gairloch)

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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.

The two mainland parishes of Lochbroom and Gairloch have a long-standing tradition as Gaelic-speaking areas. The investigations reveal that Gaelic is now on the brink of return in the northern part of Wester Ross after a century of constant decline. Whereas the recent educational activities have already succeeded in halting the decrease in the parish of Lochbroom, it can be assumed that also Gairloch is not a hopeless candidate any more. Census results in the primary school catchment of Ullapool have already shown the way how to increase both number and percentage of Gaelic speakers.

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<sup>1</sup> Original census data shown or used were supplied and/or published by the General Register Office for Scotland. The use of this material in this study is permitted under Licence No. C02W0003665. Crown Copyright of census data is acknowledged.



## 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



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## 1 Introduction

This volume looks at the development and current state of *Gàidhlig* in the north-western part of mainland *Ros is Cromba* (Ross & Cromarty). The very large parishes of *Loch a' Bhraoin* (Lochbroom) and *Geàrrloch* (Gairloch) extend over 204,000 hectares covered mainly by wide open hill and moorland. Human settlements are almost exclusively confined to a small strip along the Atlantic coastline – a legacy of the Highland clearances. The only town by any standards is *Ulapul* (Ullapool) which was founded in 1788 by the British Fishery Society. Today it is the main focus of the region acting as the most important ferry port to the Outer Hebrides. It now has a population of 1,300 people.

The remaining 3,200 inhabitants of the area are spread over a couple of small settlements from the secluded district of *Coigeach* north of *Ulapul* to the tiny village of *Ceann Loch Iùbh* (Kinlochewe) in the almost uninhabited inland part of *Geàrrloch* parish. The second small centre in the area is *Geàrrloch* itself which strictly speaking is only a cluster of small crofting townships overlooking a bay of the same name. The main occupations in this area are very diverse with the traditional occupations of crofting and inshore fishing providing an ever decreasing share of income. Nowadays tourism, fish farming and public services are the main employers in the district. The society itself has changed in recent decades with a substantial number of incomers taking residence in this region of outstanding natural beauty.

*Gàidhlig* has been the main vernacular in both parishes right until the Second World War. Today it is being revived by a substantial number of residents (locals and incomers alike) who have been the main driving forces in establishing *Gàidhlig* medium education in the two main population centres.

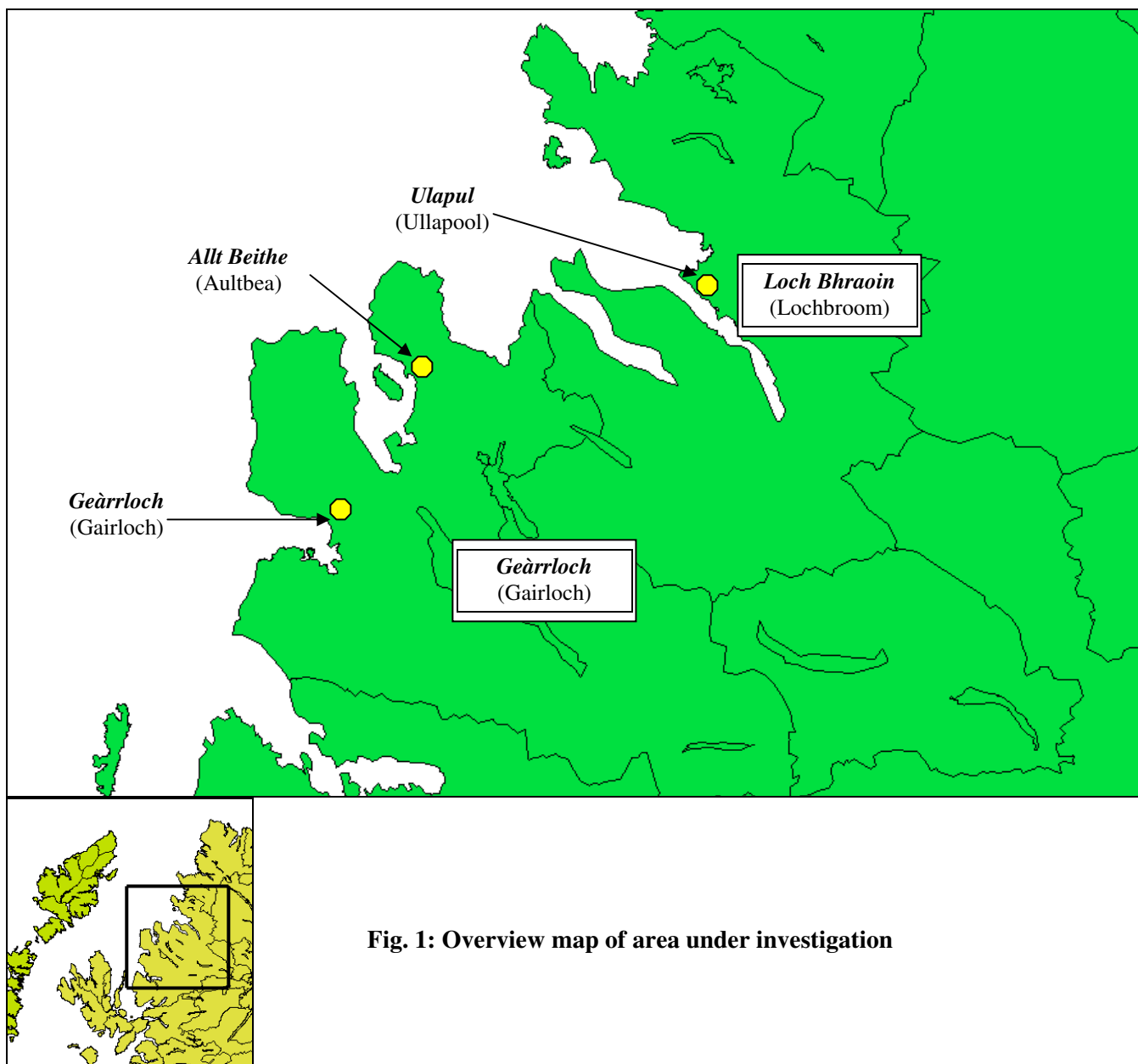
Administratively the district has been part of the ancient county of Ross & Cromarty until local government reorganisation in 1975. Afterwards it became part of the very large Highland Region with its headquarters in Inverness. Education policy (and language policy in general) became more tolerant after this reorganisation leaving behind a long period of neglect and sometimes even hostility towards *Gàidhlig* by officialdom.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the area of interest<sup>2</sup>. With this background in mind the following short chapters will look into the historical development of the use of *Gàidhlig* in the area from the end of the 19<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 taken into account where considered as useful.

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





**Fig. 1: Overview map of area under investigation**



## 2 The Historical Background

The western seaboard of the ancient county of *Ros is Cromba* (Ross & Cromarty) has long retained its traditional language background. This included of course the two large parishes of *Loch Bhraoin* and *Geàrrloch*. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century *Gàidhlig* was the general vernacular of the local population. The New Statistical Account of Scotland (1831-1845) on the one hand mentioned in its report about *Loch Bhraoin*: “*The language generally spoken is the Gaelic; but it is evidently losing ground.*” The parish minister of *Geàrrloch*, however, was not so pessimistic: “*I am not aware that it (Gaelic) has lost ground within the last forty years. Some young men, indeed, who have received a smattering of education, consider they are doing great service to the Gaelic, by interspersing their conversation with English words, and giving them a Gaelic termination and accent. These corrupters of both languages, with more pride than good taste, now and then, introduce words of bad English or of bad Scots, which they have learnt from the Newhaven or Buckie fishermen, whom they meet with on the coast of Caithness during the fishing season. The Gaelic, however, is still spoken in as great purity by the inhabitants in general, as it was forty years ago.*” Circumstances were not to be changed during the forthcoming decades.

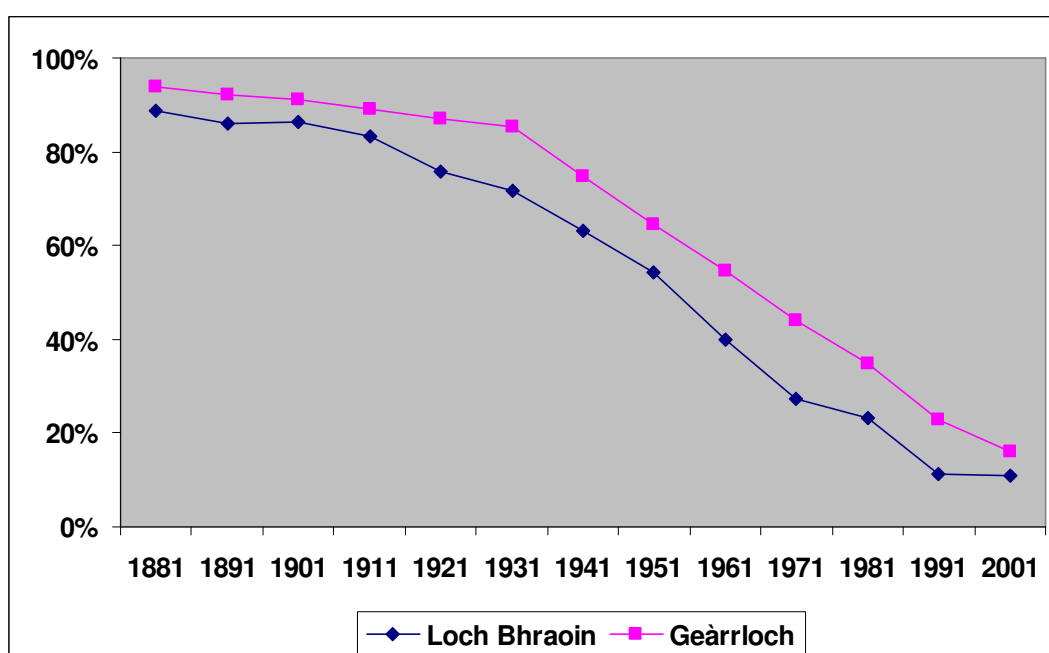


Fig. 2: Gàidhlig-speakers (3 years and over) as percentage of total population between 1881 and 2001 – areas of *Loch Bhraoin* (Lochbroom) and *Geàrrloch* (Gairloch)<sup>3</sup>

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

The first census enumeration exercises about “Gaelic-speakers” in 1881 and 1891 saw only a tiny minority of people speaking no *Gàidhlig*. In this time John H. Dixon wrote in his much appreciated book about *Geàrrloch* parish: “*To this day the Gaelic language is universal among the people of Gairloch, and they cling to it with the utmost affection..... The Gaelic language is as prevalent in Gairloch to-day as it was ..... nearly fifty years ago, notwithstanding the near approach of the railway and the greatly increased communication by steamer. The religious services of the people are conducted in Gaelic (though short English services are often added); there are scarcely any houses where English is spoken round the table or by the fire-side; though comparatively few are able to read Gaelic. At the same time the knowledge of the English language is undoubtedly on the increase, and the schools are taught in that language. Nevertheless even children fresh from school seldom speak English when playing together*” (Dixon, 1886).

<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 <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers in selected districts of <i>Loch Bhraoin</i> – 1881 - 1901					
Enumeration district(s)	All persons speaking <i>Gàidhlig</i>			Monolingual share of all <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers	
	1881 <sup>4</sup>	1891	1901	1891	1901
<i>Am Poll Bàn, Rìf &amp; Inbhir Pollaidh</i> (Polbain, Reef & Inverpolly)	831 79.3 %	402 89.5 %	327 87.9 %	205 51.0 %	92 28.1 %
<i>Aichillidh Bhuidhe &amp; Am Poll Glas</i> (Achiltibuie & Polglass)		300 91.7 %	253 91.7 %	205 51.0 %	81 29.3 %
<i>Bad an Sgàlaidh &amp; Cùl na Creige</i> (Badinscally & Culnacraig)		198 95.7 %	159 95.8 %	87 43.9 %	39 24.5 %
<i>Srath Chainneart &amp; Langail</i> (Strathkanaird & Langwell)		102 83.6 %	85 77.7 %	14 13.7 %	5 5.9 %
<i>Tannara Mòr</i> (Tanera Island)	116 97.5 %	92 96.8 %	66 93.0 %	23 25.0 %	2 3.0 %
<i>Eilean Mhàrtainn</i> (Martin Island)	38 90.5 %	43 91.5 %	30 90.9 %	8 18.6 %	7 23.3 %
<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	809 90.2 %	674 77.6 %	534 75.7 %	76 11.3 %	52 9.7 %
<i>A'Mhòr Choille &amp; An Rubha</i> (Morefield & Rhue)	446 95.5 %	152 94.4 %	93 91.2 %	27 17.8 %	5 5.4 %
<i>Àird Mhèar &amp; Ceann a'Chaolais</i> (Ardmair & Kennachaolish)		77 89.5 %	67 98.5 %	19 24.7 %	11 16.0 %
<i>Bruthaichean Ulapuil</i> (Braes of Ullapool)		54 81.8 %	52 86.7 %	9 16.7 %	13 25.0 %
<i>Leac Mhailm &amp; Àird Cheatharnaich</i> (Leckmelm & Ardcharnich)	1,486 91.8 %	118 55.7 %	103 66.9 %	13 11.0 %	5 4.9 %
<i>Am Bràigh Mòr &amp; Baile an Lòin</i> (Braemore & Inverbroom)		160 78.4 %	112 72.3 %	12 7.5 %	9 8.0 %
<i>An Leitir &amp; Allt na h-Airbhe</i> (Letters & Alltnaharrie)		299 94.9 %	277 93.0 %	74 24.7 %	36 13.0 %
<i>Am Bad Ràilleach &amp; Achadh Dà Dhòmhnail</i> (Badrallach & Dundonnell)		131 100 %	109 94.8 %	32 24.4 %	4 3.7 %
<i>Bada Call &amp; Àird Easaidh</i> (Badcall & Ardesie)		308 95.7 %	271 96.1 %	89 28.9 %	65 24.0 %
<i>Sgoraig &amp; Annat</i> (Scoraig & An Annaid)		208 90.8 %	180 91.8 %	116 55.8 %	40 22.2 %
<i>Gruinneart &amp; Innis an Iasgaich</i> (Gruinard & Fisherfield)	54 76.1 %	47 95.9 %	3 5.6 %	1 2.1 %	

**Table 1: Number of persons speaking *Gàidhlig* and all *Gàidhlig*-speakers as share of population in *Loch Bhraoin* according to local census data from 1881 to 1901**

<sup>4</sup> Speaking “habitually” *Gàidhlig*.



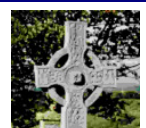
More than a quarter of the population was recorded as speaking no English in 1891. This was in line with Dixon's remarks "There are still many of the older people who are unable to speak English fluently, and some who do not understand it at all." *Geàrrloch* was slightly more *Gàidhlig*-speaking than the parish of *Loch Bhraoin* due to the presence of the small fishing harbour of *Ulapul* within its bounds. Some of the adjacent islands were still inhabited like *Eilean Iùbh* (Isle of Ewe) or *Tannara Mòr* (Tanera Island) – all strongly *Gàidhlig* speaking (see table 15) at the time.

Detailed local information is available in census reports until 1901 enabling a good impression of the geographical strength of the language in the area (tables 1-3). Before addressing the official enumeration district figures it is worth to look more closely at the original 1891 census forms<sup>5</sup> (Duwe, 2006) providing interesting additional information. Generally the official census figures were still underestimating the real strength of the language because these statistics looked at the total population present at census night. The population figures included returns from occasional visitors and counted also children aged less than three years although their language preferences were not enumerated at all. The respective "corrected" 1891 details about three small communities in *Loch Bhraoin* or *Geàrrloch* are described below:

- *Aichillidh Bhuidhe & Am Poll Glas* (Achiltibuie & Polglass): These crofting hamlets in the more remote *Coigeach* peninsula were "officially" 91.7 % *Gàidhlig*-speaking in 1891. However, in fact 289 of the 295 residents (98.0 %) spoke *Gàidhlig*. The six persons "with no Gaelic" comprised a tailor's wife (born in Olig, Caithness) and her youngest daughter, an imbecile pauper and his son as well as two young relatives of a crofter family: The eight year old niece had been born in Greenock and the four year old nephew came from anglicised Stornoway.
- *Bad an Sgàlaidh & Cùl na Creige* (Badinscally & Culnacraig): These neighbouring townships were even 99.0 % *Gàidhlig*-speaking in terms of the resident population. Among the 193 residents just two persons did not "G&E" or "G" marked on their registration sheets. However, even these returns can only be described as doubtful. A 57 old crofter with "no Gaelic" was living side by side with his twin brother who was counted as *Gàidhlig* only speaker. The other interesting return came from a nine year old girl whose parents were also *Gàidhlig* monolinguals!
- *Inbhir Àsdail* (Inverasdale): This group of tiny hamlets between *An t-Eirtheaire* (Coast) and *Nàst* (Naast) on the south-western shores of *Loch Iùbh* (Loch Ewe) was also as *Gàidhlig*-speaking as any crofting settlement in the area. 319 of the 320 residents spoke the *Gàidhlig* in 1891. The only local return with "\_\_\_" in the language row came from a six year old girl.

Keeping the notorious under-estimations in the official census figures in mind it is still worthwhile to investigate the existing geographic differences in the area. In *Loch Bhraoin* (table 1) *Gàidhlig* dominated in almost all communities. Even in the fishing harbour *Ulapul* (Ullapool) four out of five enumerated persons still spoke the local tongue. The only "exotic" result was reported concerning the enumeration district of *Leac Mhailm & Àird Cheatharnaich* (Leckmelm & Ardcharnich) apparently caused by a number of "alien residents" in the estates of Inverlael and Leckmelm including a travelling group of hawkers. Very remarkable indeed were substantial shares of *Gàidhlig* monolinguals in the whole of *Coigeach* as well as in the secluded communities around *Sgoraig*.

<sup>5</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.





Number of persons and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in selected parts of the ecclesiastic parish of <i>Poll Iù</i> (Poolewe) – 1881 - 1901					
Enumeration district(s)	All persons speaking Gàidhlig <sup>6</sup>			Monolingual share of all Gàidhlig-speakers <sup>7</sup>	
	1881 <sup>8</sup>	1891	1901	1891	1901
<i>Meallan Ùdraigil &amp; Na h-Òbainean</i> (Mellon Udrigle & Opinan)	1,349 <b>95.1 %</b>	177 <b>95.7 %</b>	165 <b>96.5 %</b>	46 <b>26.0 %</b>	46 <b>28.2 %</b>
<i>An Leathad &amp; An t-Achadh Garbh</i> (Laid & Achgarve)		188 <b>96.9 %</b>	151 <b>93.2 %</b>	36 <b>19.1 %</b>	28 <b>18.5 %</b>
<i>Sannda &amp; An t-Eirthire Shìos</i> (Sand & Second Coast)		186 <b>98.9 %</b>	138 <b>92.6 %</b>	152 <b>81.7 %</b>	26 <b>18.8 %</b>
<i>Tùrnaig &amp; Druim a'Choirce</i> (Tournaig & Drumchork)		62 <b>86.1 %</b>	69 <b>95.8 %</b>	18 <b>29.0 %</b>	13 <b>18.8 %</b>
<i>Allt Beithe &amp; Taigh na Faoilinn</i> (Aultbea & Tighnafiline)		131 <b>90.3 %</b>	127 <b>90.1 %</b>	22 <b>16.8 %</b>	29 <b>22.8 %</b>
<i>Buaile na Lùib &amp; Meallan Theàrlaich</i> (Bualnaluib & Mellon Charles)		418 <b>95.2 %</b>	328 <b>96.2 %</b>	137 <b>32.8 %</b>	67 <b>20.4 %</b>
<i>Àird Làir &amp; Leitir Iùbh</i> (Ardlair & Letterewe)		49 <b>89.1 %</b>	40 <b>90.9 %</b>	9 <b>18.4 %</b>	3 <b>7.5 %</b>
<i>Eilean Iùbh</i> (Isle of Ewe)	42 <b>97.7 %</b>	38 <b>97.4 %</b>	30 <b>96.8 %</b>	–	10 <b>33.3 %</b>
<i>Ceannasair &amp; An Lòn Dubh</i> (Kernsary & Londubh)	807 <b>92.1 %</b>	113 <b>93.4 %</b>	106 <b>88.3 %</b>	10 8.8 %	15 <b>14.2 %</b>
<i>Poll Iùbh &amp; Bùra</i> (Poolewe & Boor)		124 <b>84.9 %</b>	134 <b>88.2 %</b>	11 8.9 %	6 4.5 %
<i>Inbhir Àsdail</i> (Inverasdale)		327 <b>95.9 %</b>	258 <b>91.5 %</b>	88 <b>26.9 %</b>	66 <b>25.6 %</b>
<i>An Uaghaidh &amp; Meallan a'Ghamhna</i> (Cove & Mellongaun)		183 <b>97.3 %</b>	155 <b>97.5 %</b>	57 <b>31.1 %</b>	90 <b>58.1 %</b>

**Table 2: Number of persons speaking Gàidhlig and all Gàidhlig-speakers as share of population in the ecclesiastic parish of *Poll Iù* (Poolewe) according to census data from 1881 to 1901**

The ecclesiastic parish of *Poll Iùbh* (Poolewe) occupied the northern portion of the civil parish of *Gearrloch*. All enumeration districts reported very high percentages of Gàidhlig-speakers (table 2). In the light of the already mentioned weaknesses in the official census population base it is clear that also in this area almost all local residents spoke Gàidhlig. The share of monolingual speakers appeared to be highest in the most remote coastal communities, i.e. *Sannda & An t-Eirthire Shìos* (Sand & Second Coast) and *An Uaghaidh & Meallan a'Ghamhna* (Cove & Mellongaun).

Further south (table 3) the prevalence of the Gàidhlig language was also impressive. With the exception of the enumeration district of *Uachdar Chàirn & Baile Theàrlaich* (Auchtercairn & Charleston) English

<sup>6</sup> Percentages of Gàidhlig-speakers above 50 % are denoted in bold figures.

<sup>7</sup> Percentages of persons speaking “Gaelic only” which exceed 10 % are shown in bold figures.

<sup>8</sup> Speaking “habitually” Gàidhlig.



monolingual residents were hard to find. Even in this sole example the 1891 result was not repeated in 1901. Figures had been apparently distorted then by the presence of families headed by police constables, bank agents or public school teachers. In those circles *Gàidhlig* was of course not en vogue in this period. Strongest *Gàidhlig* community in the district was *Mealabhaig* (Melvich) with a substantial share of *Gàidhlig* monolinguals.

Number of persons and percentage of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers in selected parts of the ecclesiastic parish of <i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch) – 1881 - 1901					
Enumeration district(s)	All persons speaking <i>Gàidhlig</i> <sup>9</sup>			Monolingual share of all <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers <sup>10</sup>	
	1881 <sup>11</sup>	1891	1901	1891	1901
<i>Mealabhaig &amp; Allt Ghrìsean</i> (Melvaig & Aultgrishin)		311 <b>97.2 %</b>	268 <b>93.4 %</b>	218 <b>70.1 %</b>	75 <b>28.0 %</b>
<i>Earradal a Tuath &amp; Alltan Phàdraig</i> (North Erradale & Peterburn)		115 <b>97.5 %</b>	90 <b>96.8 %</b>	46 <b>40.0 %</b>	39 <b>43.3 %</b>
<i>Sannda Mhòr &amp; Sannda Bheag</i> (Big Sand & Little Sand)		197 <b>94.3 %</b>	191 <b>95.0 %</b>	91 <b>46.2 %</b>	50 <b>26.2 %</b>
<i>An Lòn Mòr, Mìtheall &amp; An t-Srath</i> (Lonemore, Mial & Strath)		308 <b>91.1 %</b>	317 <b>88.8 %</b>	81 <b>26.3 %</b>	32 <b>10.1 %</b>
<i>Uachdar Chàirn &amp; Baile Theàrlaich</i> (Auchtercairn & Charleston)	2,003 <b>92.6 %</b>	104 <b>59.1 %</b>	107 <b>79.3 %</b>	6 5.8 %	–
<i>Tealladal &amp; Slèiteadal</i> (Talladale & Slattadale)		39 <b>88.6 %</b>	39 <b>88.6 %</b>	–	3 7.7 %
<i>Ceann Loch Iùbh &amp; An Cromasag</i> (Kinlochewe & Cromasaig)		104 <b>89.7 %</b>	92 <b>80.7 %</b>	15 <b>14.4 %</b>	3 3.2 %
<i>Bràigh Cheann Loch Iùbh</i> (Heights of Kinlochewe)		101 <b>95.3 %</b>	83 <b>93.3 %</b>	11 <b>10.9 %</b>	3 3.6 %
<i>Earradal a Deas &amp; An Rubha Dearg</i> (South Erradale & Redpoint)		147 <b>93.6 %</b>	119 <b>92.2 %</b>	63 <b>42.9 %</b>	25 <b>21.0 %</b>
<i>Bad a'Chrò &amp; Sildeag</i> (Badachro & Shieldaig)		307 <b>89.8 %</b>	328 <b>84.1 %</b>	72 <b>23.5 %</b>	61 <b>18.6 %</b>
<i>Eilean Thòiriosdal &amp; Eilean Tioram</i> <sup>12</sup> (Horisdale Island & Dry Island)	–	33 <b>82.5 %</b>	51 <b>94.4 %</b>	4 <b>12.1 %</b>	6 <b>11.8 %</b>
<i>Diabaig a Tuath &amp; A'Chreag</i> (Diabaig North & Craig)	115 <b>100 %</b>	91 <b>100 %</b>	61 <b>98.4 %</b>	44 <b>48.4 %</b>	20 <b>32.8 %</b>

**Table 3: Number of persons speaking *Gàidhlig* and all *Gàidhlig*-speakers as share of population in the ecclesiastic parish of *Geàrrloch* (Gairloch) according to census data from 1881 to 1901**

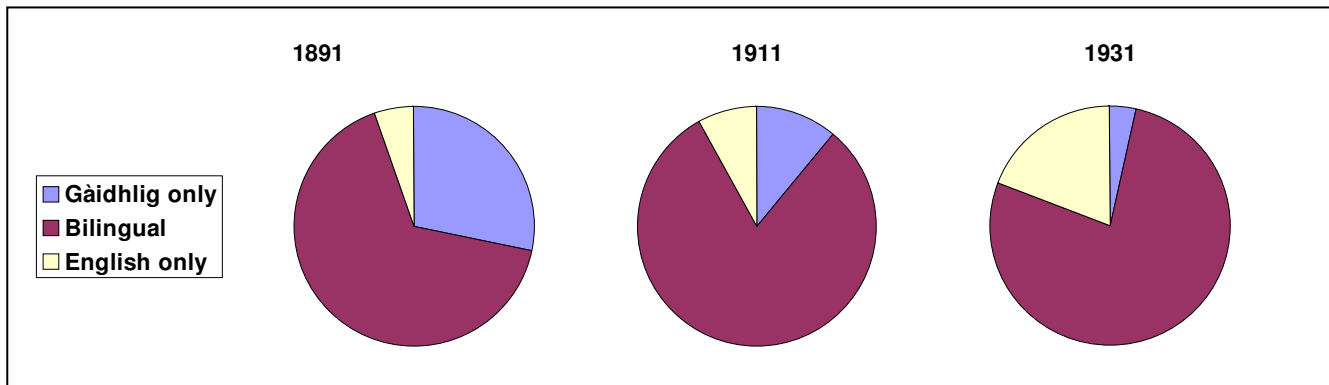
<sup>9</sup> Percentages of *Gàidhlig*-speakers above 50 % are denoted in bold figures.

<sup>10</sup> Percentages of persons speaking “Gaelic only” which exceed 10 % are shown in bold figures.

<sup>11</sup> Speaking “habitually” *Gàidhlig*.

<sup>12</sup> The islands were uninhabited in 1881.





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

As everywhere in the Highlands the official education policy did not get overwhelming support for its apparent neglect of the local language. As Dixon stated plainly: *“There has been much diversity of opinion upon the question whether it would not be better that the Gaelic language should be discouraged and be assisted to die out. I believe some few of the Highlanders themselves have adopted this unpatriotic view, but the contrary opinion ... now appears to be gaining ground. It seems quite possible that the Highlander may not only have a thorough command of English, but may also retain his own expressive language with its ennobling traditions”*. Unfortunately such an opinion was not well received by the then Inspector of Schools for Ross, Caithness and Sutherland Mr. D. Sime. He wrote officially in 1878: *“I should regard the teaching of Gaelic in schools in any shape or form as a most serious misfortune”* (Campbell, 1945). This attitude had a very destructive influence on the self-confidence of the Gàidhlig speaking population but the close knit communities still stuck to the language in day-to-day communication. The strong Protestant (especially Free Church) congregations were an additional factor in keeping Gàidhlig at the heart of the communities.

Right until the 1931 census Gàidhlig speaking remained universal in both parishes with the only exception of the township of Ulapul (Ullapool) where English made its first inroads with an increased number of incomers and visitors. Due to the influence of English-only instruction in schools the Gàidhlig monolingual population became more and more confined to the elderly and to pre-school children. Nonetheless even in 1931 there were 150 inhabitants recorded as speaking no English. The area was still seen as a stronghold of Gàidhlig even by foreign linguists. Carl Borgstrøm pointed out in his famous linguistic study on the dialects of Skye and Ross-shire in 1938: *“I started my investigations near Gairloch .... I stayed there for a fortnight; my chief informant was John MacKenzie ... but I believe that almost everybody in that little community of six or seven houses contributed something to my material.... In the structure of their phonological systems, the dialects ... do not differ from the dialects of the Hebrides and Skye.”* He mainly used material from informants in *An Rubha Dearg* (Red Point) and *Allt Beithe* (Aultbea) but could also find suitable study partners from *Poll Iùbh* (Poolewe) and *Ceann Loch Iùbh* (Kinlochewe) in those days (Borgstrøm, 1941). Before the dawn of World War II Gàidhlig was still alive and well in the northern parishes of Taobh Siar Rois (Wester Ross).

<i>Loch Bhraoin &amp; Geàrrloch</i>						
<b>Subject \ Census</b>	<b>1881</b>	<b>1891</b>	<b>1901</b>	<b>1911</b>	<b>1921</b>	<b>1931</b>
<i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers (3 years +)	8,042	7,214	6,229	5,283	4,177	3,466
% of total population	91.5 %	89.2 %	88.9 %	86.4 %	81.9 %	79.1 %

**Table 4: Number of Gàidhlig-speakers (3 years and over) in Loch Bhraoin & Geàrrloch (Lochbroom & Gairloch) and percentage of total population speaking Gàidhlig during 1881-1931**



## 2.2 Developments in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century (Census 1951–2001)

The social and economic disruption by the war proved to be very substantial in the area. There was a reduction in population by 20 % during the period 1931 to 1951 in both parishes. Between 1931 and 1951 the population share of Gàidhlig-speakers fell from 79.1 % to 60.2 %. According to census data there were only seven people left in 1951 who could not speak English. Of course the older generation still was overwhelmingly Gàidhlig-speaking.

<i>Loch Bhraoin &amp; Geàrrloch</i>						
Subject \ Census	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Gàidhlig-speakers (3 years +)	2,069	1,571	1,215	1,037	761	610
% of total population	60.2 %	47.9 %	36.2 %	29.3 %	16.7 %	13.4 %

**Table 5: Number of Gàidhlig-speakers (3 years and over) in Loch Bhraoin & Geàrrloch (Lochbroom & Gairloch) and percentage of total population speaking Gàidhlig during 1951-2001**

A report on Gàidhlig-speaking schoolchildren (Scottish Council for Research in Education, 1961) sheds some light on the strength of the language among school aged children in the 1957/58 school year. Still a few first language speakers were around in the local primary schools: They numbered five in *Loch Bhraoin* and four in *Geàrrloch*. Accordingly 3 % of the school population still had Gàidhlig as their preferred language. There is no data on those pupils who knew it as a second language but there might have been still a few. Nonetheless only a small minority of children grew up in a Gàidhlig-speaking environment. Many of the older people preferred to speak English to their children or grandchildren fearing that Gàidhlig “would hold them back”. Other children had to cope with intensive peer pressure from English speaking monoglots. The author heard it many times in *Geàrrloch* during a stay in the late 1970s: “We would speak to them in Gàidhlig but they always replied in English.”

The census of 1961 presented a further massive decline in the number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers – not very surprising indeed. Nonetheless three of the four CCEDs (County Council Electoral Divisions) in the area had a majority of Gàidhlig-speakers: *Coigeach* (54.6 %), *Poll Iùbh* (55.2 %) and *Geàrrloch* (59.5 %). The major decline was experienced around *Ulapul* where only a third of the inhabitants still spoke Gàidhlig (table 18). Afterwards the county authorities became slightly more positive with the introduction of the Ross & Cromarty Education Scheme in the early 1960s which allowed the use of the language in school with Gàidhlig mother tongue speakers. For the west coast schools this came rather late to make up for the mistakes done during the last century. The 1971 census results showed that young Gàidhlig speakers had become a rarity in *Loch Bhraoin* (a share of 5 % for those aged 5-24); in *Geàrrloch* this figure was still remarkably high at around 20 %. These figures contrasted sharply with those at pensionable age (66 % in *Loch Bhraoin* and even 78 % in *Geàrrloch* spoke Gàidhlig – see tables 19 and 22). All in all there was no CCED in 1971 left with a Gàidhlig-speaking majority.

During the next few years there was depressingly little done to keep the language alive. The once frequently held Gàidhlig services of the various Protestant denominations were discontinued one by one as the older generation passed away and English only became the game of the day. Little attempts were made to teach Gàidhlig as a second language and with no real vigour (see fig. 4 and 5). The bilingual street signs in *Ulapul* seemed to be the last relics of a not so distant past when the streets were filled with lively Gàidhlig voices. At a time when the first signs of a “Gaelic Renaissance” surfaced (especially on nearby *An t-Eilean Sgitheanach*) it stayed very quiet in *Taobh Siar Rois*.



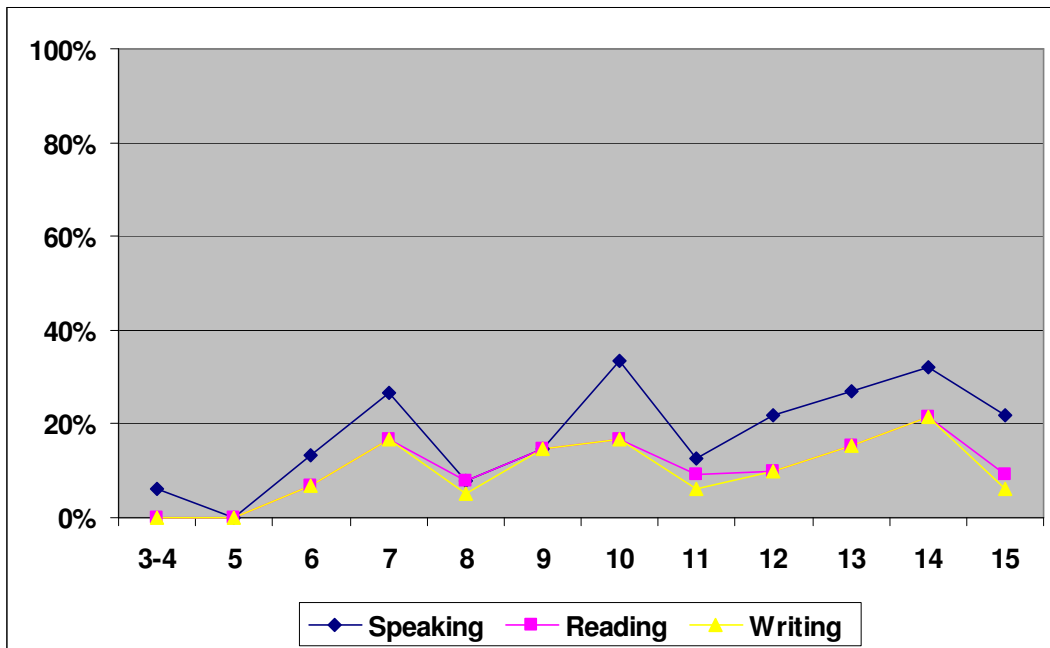


Fig. 4: Percentage of children able to speak, read or write Gàidhlig in different age groups in 1981 – Loch Bhraoin (Lochbroom)

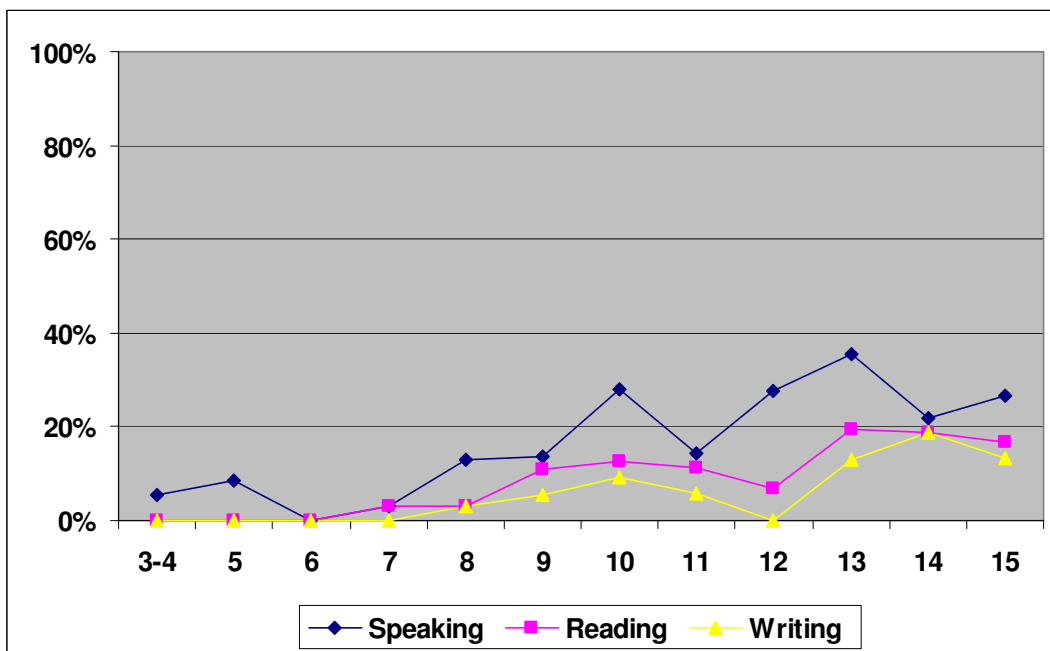


Fig. 5: Percentage of children able to speak, read or write Gàidhlig in different age groups in 1981 – Geàrrloch (Gairloch)

In 1981 the educational success of Gàidhlig language teaching (if any) in both parishes was minimal as depicted in figures 4 and 5. But still census output areas existed with more than 40 % Gàidhlig-speakers - all of them in more remote communities of the area (tables 20 and 22): *Aichillidh Bhuidhe* (Achiltibuie) and *An t-Alltan Dubh* (Altandhu) in *Coigeach* northwest of *Ulapul* as well as *Mealbhaig* (Melvaig), *Inbhir Asdail* (Inverasdale), *Meallan Theàrlaich* (Mellon Charles) and *Meallan Ùdraigil*



(Mellon Udrigle) near *Geàrrloch*. Although the number of speakers due to the age structure of the *Gàidhlig* speaking population went down relentlessly the private attitudes towards the language were slowly changing also in this rural area. Still lagging behind developments in other areas the *croileagan* movement was able to get a foothold with the opening of *Gàidhlig*-speaking playgroups – first in *Geàrrloch* and then at the beginning of the 1990s in *Ulapul*. Even the new local museum *Taigh Tasgaidh Gheàrrloch* (Gairloch Heritage Museum) started to inform visitors about the linguistic history of the area – often to their astonishment and surprise. These first tiny steps were of course not sufficient to improve the state of the language until 1991 - especially when considering that educational provision in primary and secondary schools had reached an all time low.

In the 1991 census language transmission was found to be very weak in the district of *Ros is Cromba* (Ross & Cromarty). Only 96 families remained where all adults were *Gàidhlig*-speaking. All dependent children spoke *Gàidhlig* in only 46 % of these households. In a further 12 % some of the children did so. Such figures were in stark contrast with the situation in families in the neighbouring district of *An t-Eilean Sgitheanach & Loch Aillse* (Skye & Lochalsh) where language transmission was found to be much more efficient (table 6).

Census 1991: Households with dependent children aged 3 and over						
	<i>An t-Eilean Sgitheanach &amp; Loch Aillse</i>			<i>Ros is Cromba, Cataibh &amp; Loch Abar</i>		
Household composition	No children speak <i>Gàidhlig</i>	Some ch. speak <i>Gàidhlig</i>	All children speak <i>Gàidhlig</i>	No children speak <i>Gàidhlig</i>	Some ch. speak <i>Gàidhlig</i>	All children speak <i>Gàidhlig</i>
All adults speak G.	56 (21.7 %)	14 (5.4 %)	188 (72.9 %)	86 (47.5 %)	15 (8.3 %)	80 (44.2 %)
Some adults speak G.	176 (55.0 %)	39 (12.2 %)	105 (32.8 %)	496 (78.7 %)	54 (8.6 %)	80 (12.7 %)
No adults speak G.	490 (78.3 %)	52 (8.3 %)	84 (13.4 %)	8,068 (95.9 %)	187 (2.2 %)	157 (1.9 %)
Total	722 (60.0 %)	105 (8.7 %)	377 (31.3 %)	8,650 (93.8 %)	256 (2.8 %)	317 (3.4 %)

**Table 6: Households according to language abilities of parents and dependent children in 1991 for *Ros is Cromba, Cataibh & Loch Abar* (Ross & Cromarty, Sutherland & Lochaber) and *An t-Eilean Sgitheanach & Loch Aillse* (Skye & Lochalsh)**

The wind of change, however, did not bypass the area. Many parents became very much concerned about the loss of cultural values with the demise of *Gàidhlig*. They wanted to ensure that the local language should play an important role in the education of their offspring. The most enthusiastic mothers or fathers came from two very different strands. Many were born locally and had been deprived from speaking the language by their own parents. Others had moved into the area recently – sometimes even from England or abroad – and found it absolutely normal that their children should speak also the language of the area. There were of course some technical problems to be solved (accommodation for playgroups, teachers, money, etc.) but astonishingly (but not surprisingly) some opposition was voiced from local people as well. The decades of brainwashing exercise by the educational system still showed some results. Notwithstanding this *Gàidhlig*-medium education eventually was introduced in two primary schools of the area: *Geàrrloch* (1990) and *Ulapul* (1993). Especially *Ulapul* (Ullapool) experienced a flying start and recorded a remarkable intake of 11 in the first year. This strong performance was repeated until today with approximately a third of all pupils entering GME. *Geàrrloch* on the other hand



had many ups and downs mainly caused by the lack of suitable teachers but nevertheless the torch was held up through all the storms of bureaucracy and partial complacency of the local *Gàidhlig* community.

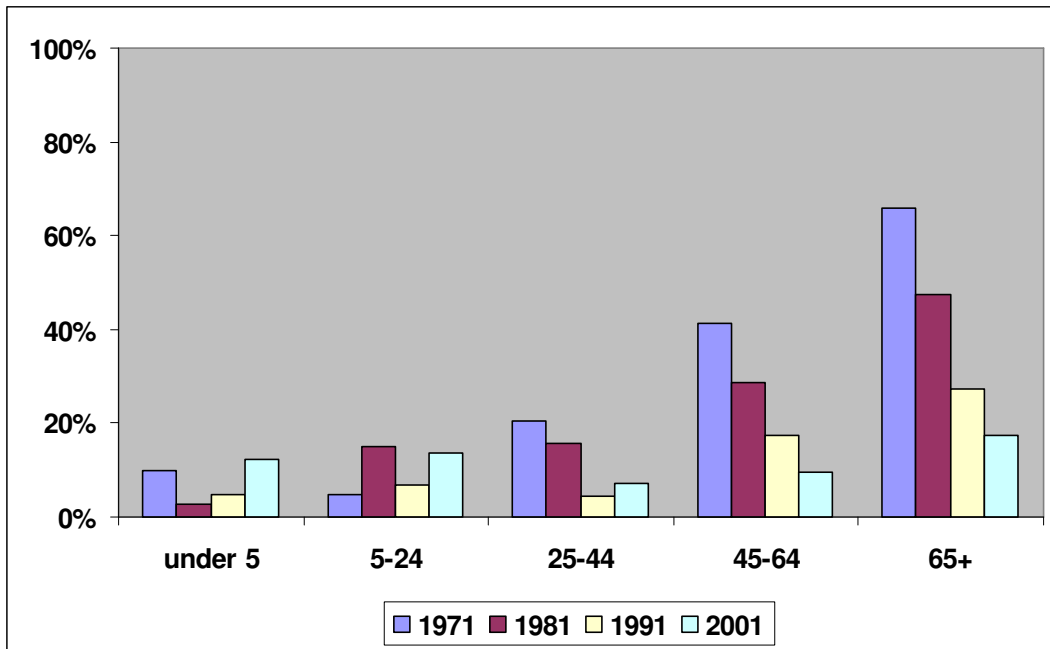


Fig. 6: Percentage of *Gàidhlig*-speakers in different age groups between 1971 and 2001 – Area of *Loch Bhraoin* (Lochbroom)<sup>13</sup>

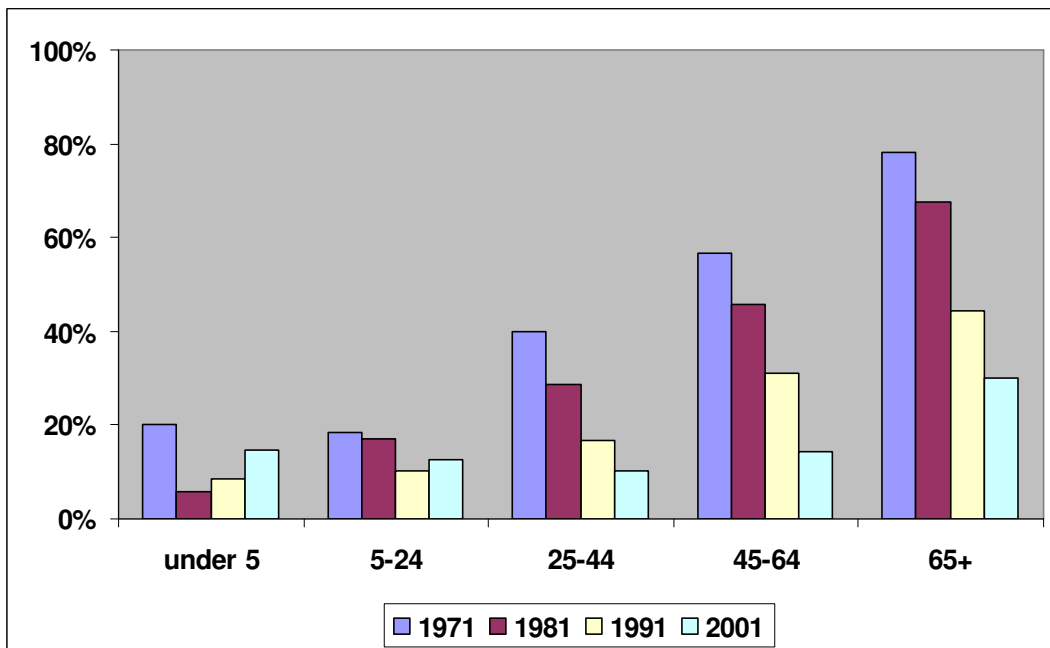


Fig. 7: Percentage of *Gàidhlig*-speakers in different age groups between 1971 and 2001 – Area of *Geàrrloch* (Gairloch)

<sup>13</sup> Under 5: *Gàidhlig* abilities in the age group 3-4 until 1991, in 2001 in all age groups 0-4.



The census results of 2001 provided a very diverse picture with the parish of *Geàrrloch* still losing speakers at a high rate and *Loch Bhraoin* experiencing a dramatic consolidation. The latter of course was caused by the very positive developments in *Ulapul* both in education and in a general enthusiasm of many adults towards *Gàidhlig*. In this context it is very informative to look at the language intensity in different age groups between 1971 and 2001 (figures 6 and 7). There has been an increase of *Gàidhlig*-speaking in younger age groups in *Loch Bhraoin* as well as in *Geàrrloch*.

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

Further evidence of the frequent use of *Gàidhlig* in other spheres than the home can be provided in looking at the information on the ability to read or write *Gàidhlig* (see tables 7 and 8 below).

	Number of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers with ability to read <i>Gàidhlig</i>				Percentage of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers with ability to read <i>Gàidhlig</i>			
	1971	1981	1991	2001	1971	1981	1991	2001
<b><i>Loch Bhraoin (Lochbroom)</i></b>	200	219	127	163	47.1 %	54.9 %	48.5 %	65.2 %
<b><i>Geàrrloch (Gairloch)</i></b>	465	373	274	224	59.6 %	58.5 %	54.7 %	61.5 %

**Table 7: Number of people able to read *Gàidhlig* and *Gàidhlig* readers as a percentage of *Gàidhlig*-speakers (1971-2001)**

	Number of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers with ability to write <i>Gàidhlig</i>				Percentage of <i>Gàidhlig</i> -speakers with ability to write <i>Gàidhlig</i>			
	1971	1981	1991	2001	1971	1981	1991	2001
<b><i>Loch Bhraoin (Lochbroom)</i></b>	95	142	97	126	22.4 %	35.6 %	37.0 %	50.4 %
<b><i>Geàrrloch (Gairloch)</i></b>	190	214	185	167	24.4 %	33.5 %	36.9 %	45.9 %

**Table 8: Number of people able to write *Gàidhlig* and *Gàidhlig* writers as a percentage of *Gàidhlig*-speakers (1971-2001)**

In 1971 the ability to read *Gàidhlig* was a direct function of the strength of the Free Church which used to stick to the language in worship and Sunday schools. Not unexpectedly the CCED of *Ulapul* had the lowest percentage of *Gàidhlig* readers, only 45.2 % of *Gàidhlig* speakers could also read written text in the language. The remaining more rural electoral divisions showed far higher percentages: *Coigeach* (56.5 %), *Poll Iùbh* (52.9 %) and *Geàrrloch* (68.1 %). The latter was surpassed on the mainland only by the adjacent remote parish of *A'Chomraich* (Applecross). Rather interestingly writing ability did not show such a large variation over the area.

The educational history of the last decades is shown in figures 8 and 9 where reading ability is demonstrated for major age groups. It can clearly be seen that the success of school education started only in the 1980s. It reached satisfactory levels as late as the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Nowadays reading and writing abilities within the *Gàidhlig* speaking population are nearly the same everywhere.





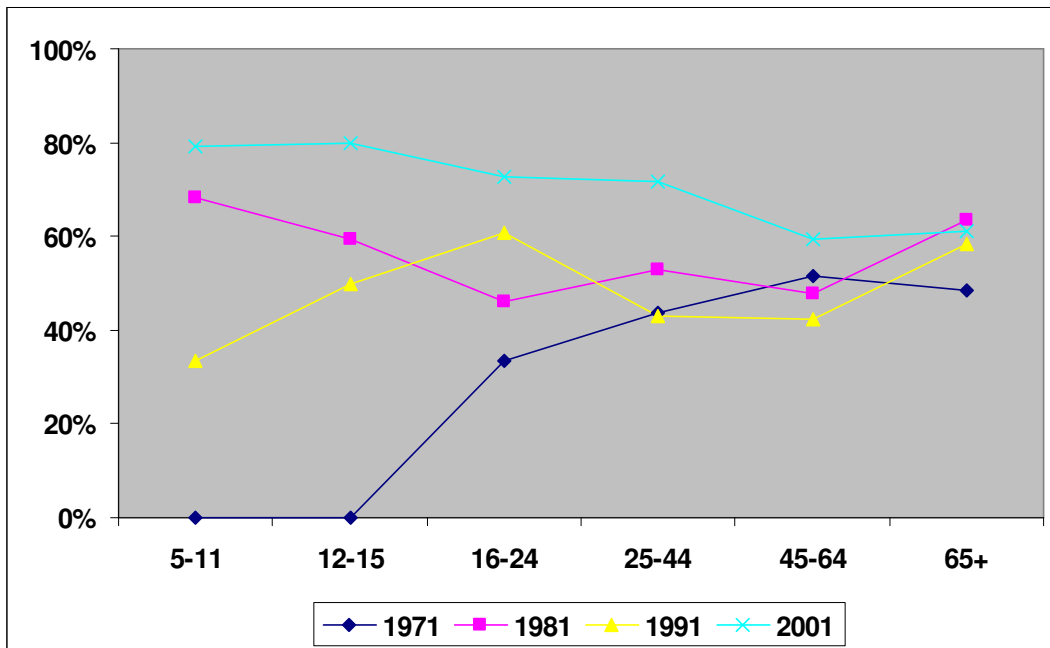


Fig. 8: Persons able to read *Gàidhlig* as a percentage of *Gàidhlig*-speakers in different age groups (1971-2001): *Loch Bhraoin*

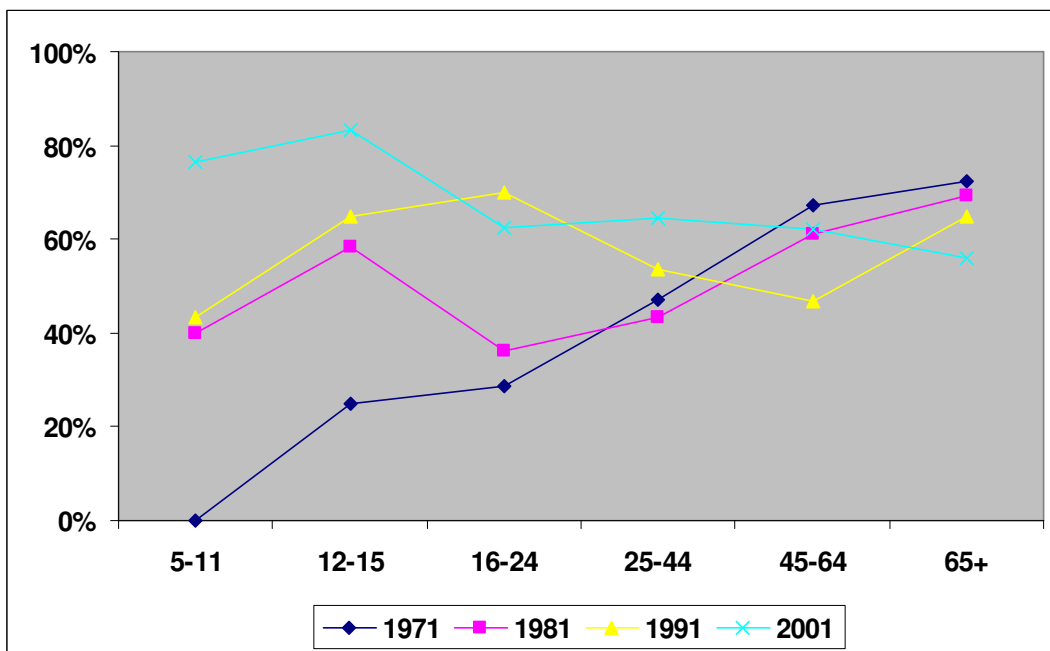


Fig. 9: Persons able to read *Gàidhlig* as a percentage of *Gàidhlig*-speakers in different age groups (1971-2001): *Geàrrloch*



### 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

There is a marked difference in comparing the census results for both areas – *Loch Bhraoin* and *Geàrrloch*. The latter is still the more strongly *Gàidhlig* parish; the former shows more dynamics in the language community.

In general the following conclusions may be drawn from the 2001 census information (special consideration is given to educational aspects in section 3.2 dealing with the young generation in school catchments) for *Loch Bhraoin (Lochbroom)*:

- The *Gàidhlig* language abilities (fig. 10) are now comparable between the older to younger generations. Roughly 8 % of the pre-school children at least understand the language. The small intergenerational difference between values for the age group 3-24 and the total population (table 9) is especially encouraging.
- A considerable increase in *Gàidhlig*-speaking has occurred since 1991 (table 9) in younger age groups. In the age cohort of 3-24 the percentage of *Gàidhlig*-speakers is up by 7.0 %. Even overall there was only a slight decrease by 0.6 % since 1991.
- Locally the language strength varies considerably. The detail of census output areas show those being able to speak the language ranged from a share of roughly 22 % in *An Leitir* (Letters) in the south of the parish to some 4 % in parts of *Ulapul* (table 20). The corresponding figures for the „understands spoken Gaelic” category reach their extreme values in the same places and range between around 32 % and more than 6 % (table 23).
- Fig. 11 outlines that even in 2001 about 45 % of the population lived in neighbourhoods where over 20 % of the people knew at least some *Gàidhlig*.
- Literacy in the language is dramatically improving with 65.2 % of speakers being able to read and 50.4 % of speakers able to write text in the language.
- In the new category of children aged less than 3 years there were only a few reported as being able to speak *Gàidhlig* (2 children) or to understand spoken *Gàidhlig* (3 children).
- In addition to those able to speak *Gàidhlig* (10.9 % of the population) 156 inhabitants (6.8 %) were at least able to understand, read or write the language.



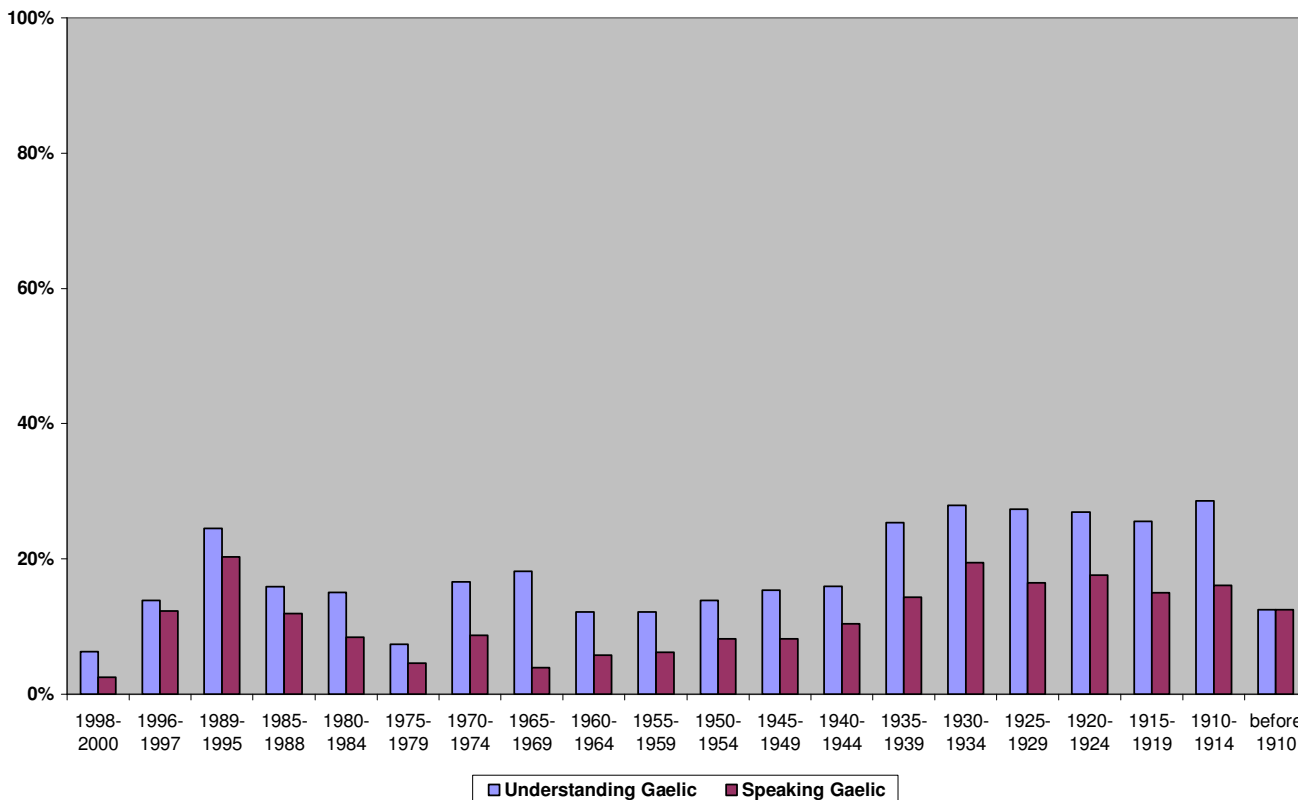


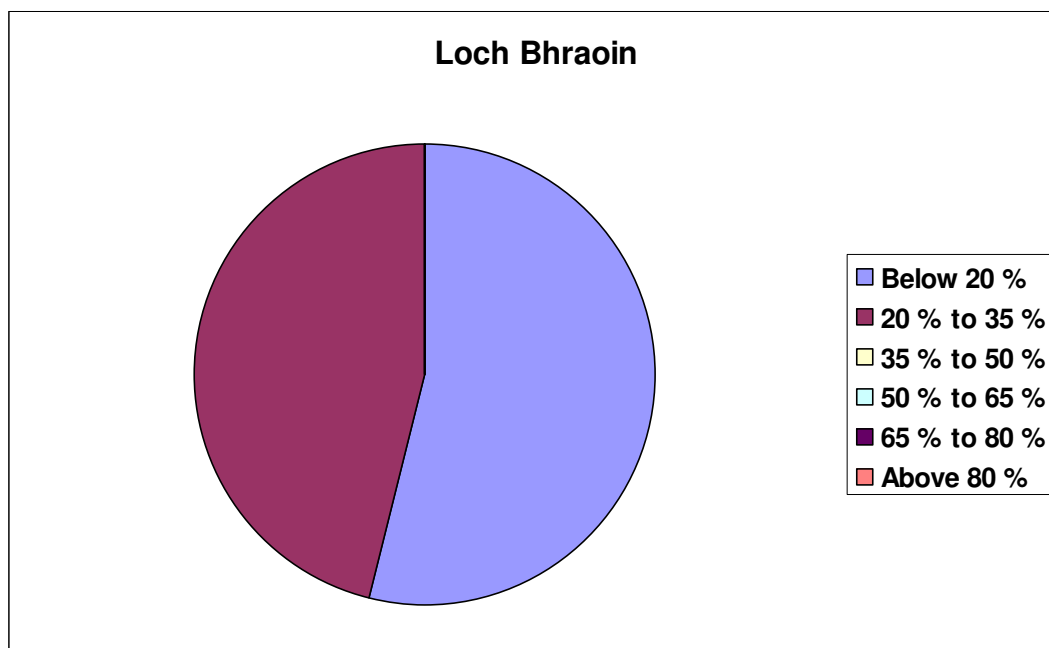
Fig. 10: Percentage of population able to understand or speak Gàidhlig and year of birth – Loch Bhraoin (Lochbroom) according to Census 2001

Age group	2001						1991		Diff. 2001 – 1991
	Knowing <sup>14</sup> Gàidhlig		Able to speak & read Gàidhlig		Able to speak Gàidhlig		Able to speak Gàidhlig		
0-2	5	6.3 %	0	0.0 %	2	2.5 %	n/a	n/a	n/a
3-4	9	13.9 %	1	1.5 %	8	12.3 %	3	4.8 %	+ 7.5 %
5-11	52	24.5 %	34	16.0 %	43	20.3 %	9	4.6 %	+15.7 %
12-15	20	15.9 %	12	9.5 %	15	11.9 %	6	6.2 %	+ 5.7 %
16-24	19	11.2 %	8	4.7 %	11	6.5 %	23	8.6 %	- 2.1 %
3-24	100	17.5 %	55	9.6 %	77	13.5 %	41	6.5 %	+ 7.0 %
All ages	406	17.7 %	163	7.1 %	250	10.9 %	262	11.5 %	- 0.6 %
Difference		- 0.2 %		+ 2.5 %		+ 2.6 %		- 5.0 %	

Table 9: Knowledge of Gàidhlig in younger age groups in Loch Bhraoin (Lochbroom) in 2001 and 1991

<sup>14</sup> Persons able to understand spoken Gàidhlig and/or able to speak, read or write Gàidhlig.





**Fig. 11: Share of population living in neighbourhoods (census output areas) with different intensity of language knowledge in *Loch Bhraoin* (Lochbroom) according to Census 2001**

Conditions in the area of *Geàrrloch* (Gairloch) around 2001 may be characterised as follows:

- There is a considerable decrease in *Gàidhlig* language abilities (fig. 12) from older to younger generations. Roughly 10 % of the pre-school children know the language. The inter-generational difference (table 10) has been remarkably reduced from 13.3 % in 1991 to 3.1 % in 2001.
- A slight increase in *Gàidhlig*-speaking has occurred since 1991 (table 10) in younger age groups. In the age cohort of 3-24 the percentage of *Gàidhlig*-speakers is up by over 2 %.
- Results are not the same over the whole parish. The local detail of census output areas show those being able to speak the language ranged from a share of roughly 28 % in *Mealbhaig* (Melvaig) to some 7 % in *Bad a'Chròtha* (Badachro). The corresponding figures for the „understands spoken Gaelic” category vary between around 33 % also in *Mealbhaig* and more than 13 % in *Poll Iùbh* (Poolewe).
- About two thirds of the population live in neighbourhoods where over 20 % of the people know at least some *Gàidhlig* (fig. 13).
- *Gàidhlig* literacy is relatively high with 61.5 % of speakers being able to read and 45.9 % of speakers able to write the language.
- In the new category of children aged less than 3 years two entrants were counted as able to speak *Gàidhlig* and another two as able to understand spoken *Gàidhlig*.



- In addition to those able to speak Gàidhlig (15.9 % of the population) 155 inhabitants (6.8 %) were at least able to understand, read or write the language.

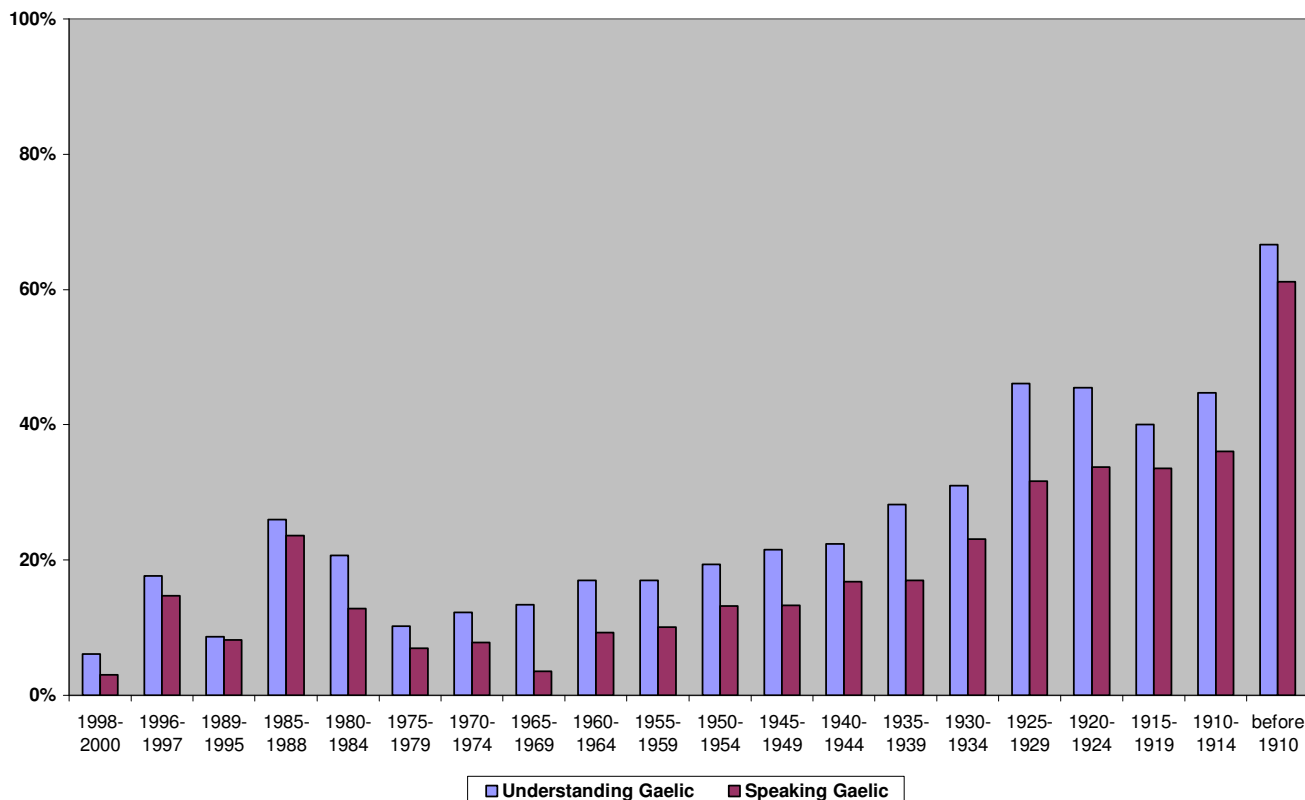


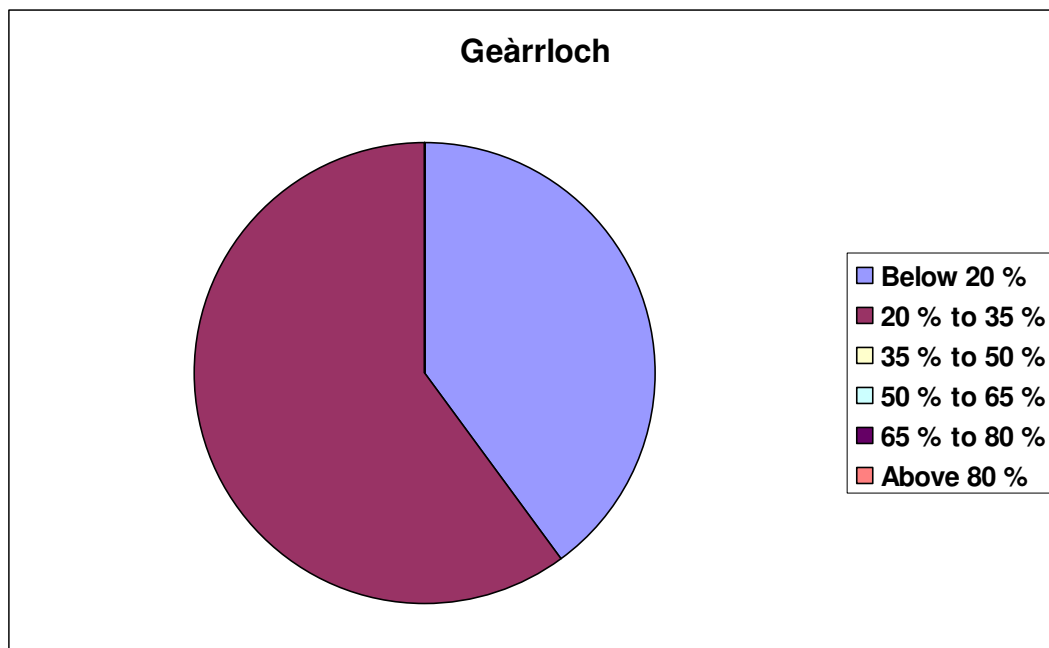
Fig. 12: Percentage of population able to understand or speak Gàidhlig and year of birth – Geàrrloch (Gairloch) according to Census 2001

Age group	2001						1991		Diff. 2001 – 1991
	Knowing <sup>15</sup> Gàidhlig		Able to speak & read Gàidhlig		Able to speak Gàidhlig		Able to speak Gàidhlig		
0-2	4	6.1 %	0	0.0 %	2	3.0 %	n/a	n/a	n/a
3-4	6	17.7 %	1	2.9 %	5	14.7 %	5	8.5 %	+ 6.5 %
5-11	18	8.7 %	13	6.3 %	17	8.2 %	23	10.4 %	- 2.2 %
12-15	33	26.0 %	25	19.7 %	30	23.6 %	17	13.9 %	+ 9.7 %
16-24	25	15.4 %	10	6.2 %	16	9.9 %	20	8.6 %	+ 1.3 %
3-24	82	15.4 %	49	9.2 %	68	12.8 %	65	10.2 %	+ 2.6 %
All ages	519	22.7 %	224	9.8 %	364	15.9 %	499	23.5 %	- 7.6 %
Difference		- 7.3 %		- 0.6 %		- 3.1 %		- 13.3 %	

Table 10: Knowledge of Gàidhlig in younger age groups in Geàrrloch (Gairloch) in 2001 and 1991

<sup>15</sup> Persons able to understand spoken Gàidhlig and/or able to speak, read or write Gàidhlig.





**Fig. 13: Share of population living in neighbourhoods (census output areas) with different intensity of language knowledge in Geàrrloch (Gairloch) according to Census 2001**

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

It is possible to calculate numbers and percentages for different age groups in school catchments by using local area statistics. This data has 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 11 with the age group of 24-35 representing roughly the language abilities of possible parents.

The educational efforts in both parishes show some effects in the census results. Generally it seems that the influence of Gàidhlig-medium developments is the overall factor in this positive improvement – the tuition of Gàidhlig as a second language, however, can only be described as either non-existent (in *Loch Bhraoin*) or inefficient (in *Geàrrloch*):

- Pre-school children: *Cròileagan* and Gàidhlig-medium nurseries existed in *Ulapul* and *Geàrrloch*. Outside these locations there were very few children under the age of 5 who knew any Gàidhlig.
- Primary school children: Two primary schools in the area offered Gàidhlig medium education: *Geàrrloch* (6 pupils in 2000/2001) and *Ulapul* (50 pupils). These numbers correspond almost exactly with the census returns and meant 3.1 % and 25.1 % respectively of the whole school population in those areas. On the one hand this underlines the effectiveness of this first language approach, on the other hand this shows the almost total lack of second language teaching in primary schools of the area.
- Secondary school children: In secondary stages S1 and S2 13 pupils were learning Gàidhlig as “fluent speakers” (10 in *Ulapul* and 3 in *Geàrrloch*) at the time of the census. 11 pupils had gone through GME before entering secondary education. 27 secondary pupils in Gairloch High School were taking Gàidhlig as second language – in Ullapool High School there was



no second language provision at all. In conclusion census data were almost identical to the statistics of the corresponding school years.

- **Parents:** Approximately one in six of the parents had a *Gàidhlig* background. This is roughly in line with the language intensity in the school aged population.

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>Aichillidh Bhuidhe</i> (Achiltibuie)	3	15.0 %	1	3.9 %	2	13.3 %	2
<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	10	9.4 %	50	32.9 %	16	17.6 %	33	17.0 %
<i>Bada Call &amp; Sgoraig</i> (Badcaul & Scoraig)	1	6.7 %	1	3.5 %	2	11.8 %	7	30.4 %
<i>Buaile na Lùib (Allt Beithe)</i> Bualnaluib (Aultbea)	-	-	1	1.8 %	9	25.7 %	5	13.5 %
<i>Inbhir Asdail</i> (Inverasdale)	-	-	5	31.3 %	4	28.6 %	2	22.2 %
<i>Poll Iùbh</i> (Poolewe)	1	6.7 %	2	6.3 %	4	36.4 %	1	3.5 %
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch)	8	14.3 %	8	9.5 %	14	24.1 %	16	14.3 %
<i>Ceann Loch Iùbh</i> (Kinlochewe)	1	14.3 %	2	9.5 %	2	22.2 %	1	12.5 %

**Table 11: Number and percentage of persons with knowledge of *Gàidhlig* in selected age groups for primary school catchment areas according to the census 2001**

These figures show a very large margin for considerable improvements in the intensity of *Gàidhlig* teaching in both parishes. Especially the almost total absence of second language provision leaves much space for further growth. Albeit numerically very limited the already existing language activities have resulted in improved census returns for the catchment area of *Bun-sgoil Ulapuil*. Here both the number and share of population of *Gàidhlig* speakers have increased since 1991. Table 12 illustrates this positive development.

<i>Gàidhlig</i> -speaking population in catchment area of <i>Bun-sgoil Ulapuil</i> (Ullapool Primary School)		
Census 1981	246	20.8 %
Census 1991	181	11.2 %
Census 2001	195	11.5 %

**Table 12: Number and percentage of persons able to speak *Gàidhlig* in the catchment area of *Bun-sgoil Ulapuil* (Ullapool Primary School) according to census results from 1981 – 2001**



## 4 Future Perspectives

The age structure and geographical distribution of the *Gàidhlig* speaking population is the basis on which future language growth or decline will occur. In both parishes the traditional language has still a considerable base with language community indicators (LCI<sup>16</sup>) of 22.6 % in *Loch Bhraoin* and even 32.6 % in *Geàrrloch*. The language viability indicator (LVI<sup>17</sup>) was far more encouraging in *Loch Bhraoin* than in the settlements of *Geàrrloch* where intergenerational language-maintenance seems to have been less satisfactory (table 13).

Area	Knowledge of <i>Gàidhlig</i> in 2001					
	Young age (0-24)		All ages		Difference (Language viability indicator)	Born in Scotland (Language community indicator)
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom)	105	16.1 %	406	17.7 %	- 1.6 %	22.6 %
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch)	86	14.4 %	519	22.7 %	- 8.3 %	32.6 %
<i>In comparison: Gaidhealtachd</i>	7.0 %		8.9 %		- 1.9 %	10.0 %

**Table 13: Intergenerational viability and *Gàidhlig*-speakers born in Scotland in *Loch Bhraoin* and *Geàrrloch* compared with the whole *Gaidhealtachd* (Highland) local authority according to census data of 2001**

The variation of the local LVI is very high. Generally negative values pre-dominate with the notable exception of the town of *Ulapul*. The LCI is generally below 25 % (tables 23 and 24) with maximum values of 40.9 % at *Leitir* (Letters), 48.6 % at *Mealbhaig* (Melvaig), 42.2 % at *Meallan Theàrlaich* (Mellon Charles) and 41.4 % at *Earradal Shuas* (South Erradale). The knowledge of *Gàidhlig* in younger age-groups (tables 23 and 24) is generally distributed along the lines of educational provision in local schools (see also subchapter 3.2). Maximum values of around 35 % are reached in this age group (under 25 years of age) in or near *Ulapul*.

Since 2001 further positive developments have taken place in the area. The unit in *Geàrrloch* has experienced a strong increase in its roll (figure 14). In 2003/2004 also 17 pre-school children were enrolled at the age of 3 or 4 in the two *Gàidhlig* nursery units at *Geàrrloch* and *Ulapul*. The second language teaching in primary schools has also taken a considerable boost. The recently introduced GLPS scheme covers now all schools of the Gairloch High School catchment area from *Ceann Loch Iùbh* to *Bada Call*. Also bilingual sign-posting along the main road between the East and *Ulapul* has given *Gàidhlig* a more prominent place in the region.

**In conclusion: After a century of constant decline *Gàidhlig* is now on the brink of return in the northern part of *Taobh Siar Rois*. Whereas the recent activities have already succeeded in halting the decrease in the parish of *Loch Bhraoin*, it can be assumed that also *Geàrrloch* is not a hopeless candidate any more. The primary school catchment of *Ulapul* has shown the way to succeed in increasing both number and percentage of *Gàidhlig* speakers.**

<sup>16</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.

<sup>17</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.





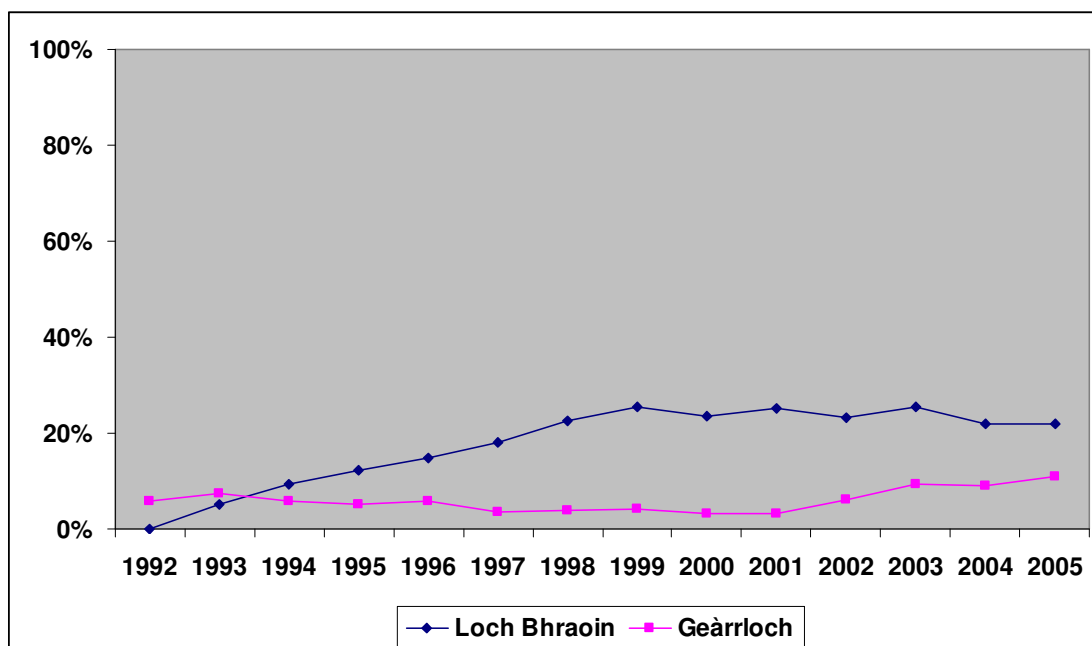


Fig. 14: Share of primary school children attending Gàidhlig-medium classes in *Loch Bhraoin* and *Geàrrloch* (September 1992 – September 2005)<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Gaelic Dept, University of Strathclyde.



## I. Supplementary Tables

Census	<i>Civil Parish</i>	
	<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Loch-broom)	<i>Geàrr Loch</i> (Gairloch)
1881 <sup>19</sup>	3,726	4,316
1891	3,362	3,852
1901	2,769	3,460
1911	2,329	2,954
1921	1,752	2,425
1931	1,439	2,027
1951	787	1,282
1961	596	975
1971	425	790
1981	399	638
1991	262	499
2001	248	362

**Table 14: Number of Gàidhlig-speakers (aged 3 years and over) for the two civil parishes according to census data from 1881 to 2001**

Census	<i>Civil Parish</i>	
	<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Loch-broom)	<i>Geàrr Loch</i> (Gairloch)
1881	88.9 %	94.0 %
1891	86.0 %	92.1 %
1901	86.3 %	91.1 %
1911	83.4 %	89.0 %
1921	75.6 %	87.2 %
1931	71.8 %	85.3 %
1951	54.4 %	64.4 %
1961	40.0 %	54.5 %
1971	27.2 %	44.0 %
1981	23.3 %	34.9 %
1991	11.1 %	22.7 %
2001	10.8 %	15.8 %

**Table 15: Gàidhlig-speakers (aged 3 years and over) as percentage of total population for the two civil parishes according to census data from 1881 to 2001**

<sup>19</sup> The 1881 census question was concerned with „habitually“ speaking Gaelic.



<b>Gaelic and Gaelic only between 1881 and 1891: <i>Loch Bhraoin &amp; Geàrrloch</i></b>	Total Popula- tion	<i>Gàidhlig</i> and Eng- lish	<i>Gàidhlig</i> but no English
<b>Census/Selected Area</b>			
<b>1881 (Speaking “habitually” Gaelic)</b>	<b>8,785</b>	<b>8,042</b>	
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom) CP	4,191	3,726	
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch) CP	4,594	4,316	
----- Inhabited islands and villages (included in the above) ---			
<i>Eilean Ghruinneart</i> (Gruinard Island)	6	6	
<i>Eilean Mhàrtainn</i> (Martin Island)	42	38	
<i>Tannara Mòr</i> (Tanera Island)	119	116	
<i>Eilean Ruisteil</i> (Ristol Island)	1	-	
<i>Eilean Tioram</i> (Dry Island)	-	-	
<i>Eilean Thòiriosdal</i> (Horisdale Island)	-	-	
<i>Eilean Iùbh</i> (Ewe Island)	43	42	
<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) Vi	897	809	
----- Ecclesiastic parishes (differing from areas above) ---			
<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	2,573	2,240	
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom)	1,618	1,486	
<i>Poll Iùbh</i> (Poolewe)	2,317	2,198	
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch)	3,018	2,810	
----- Census registration districts (differing from areas above) ---			
<i>Coigeach</i> (Coigach)	1,167	947	
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom)	3,024	2,779	
<i>Geàrrloch Tuathanach</i> (Gairloch Northern)	1,461	1,391	
<i>Geàrrloch Deasach</i> (Gairloch Southern)	3,018	2,810	
<b>1891</b>	<b>8,091</b>	<b>5,047</b>	<b>2,137</b>
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom) CP	3,910	2,462	900
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch) CP	4,181	2,615	1,237
----- Inhabited islands and villages (included in the above) ---			
<i>Eilean Mhàrtainn</i> (Martin Island)	47	35	8
<i>Tannara Mòr</i> (Tanera Island)	95	69	23
<i>Eilean Ruisteil</i> (Ristol Island)	-	-	-
<i>Eilean Iùbh</i> (Ewe Island)	39	38	-
<i>Eilean Tioram</i> (Dry Island)	9	8	-
<i>Eilean Thòiriosdal</i> (Horisdale Island)	31	21	4
<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) Vi	868	598	76
----- Ecclesiastic parishes (differing from areas above) ---			
<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	2,423	1,530	566
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom)	1,487	932	334
<i>Poll Iùbh</i> (Poolewe)	2,110	1,403	585
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch)	2,071	1,212	652
----- Census registration districts (differing from areas above) ---			
<i>Coigeach</i> (Coigach)	1,074	584	408
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom)	2,836	1,878	492
<i>Geàrrloch Tuathanach</i> (Gairloch Northern)	1,317	829	420
<i>Geàrrloch Deasach</i> (Gairloch Southern)	2,773	1,739	773

**Table 16: Number of persons speaking *Gàidhlig* between 1881 and 1891 – selected areas (civil and ecclesiastic parishes, census registration districts, villages or inhabited islands) in *Loch Bhraoin & Geàrrloch***



<b>Gaelic and Gaelic only between 1901 and 1931: Loch Bhraoin &amp; Geàrrloch</b>	Total Popula- tion	Gàidhlig and Eng- lish	Gàidhlig but no English
<b>Census/Selected Area</b>			
<b>1901</b>	<b>7,004</b>	<b>5,046</b>	<b>1,183</b>
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom) CP	3,207	2,302	467
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch) CP	3,797	2,744	716
----- Inhabited islands and villages (included in the above) ---			
<i>Eilean Mhàrtainn</i> (Martin Island)	33	23	7
<i>Tannara Mòr</i> (Tanera Island)	71	64	2
<i>Eilean Ruisteil</i> (Ristol Island)	-	-	-
<i>Eilean Iùbh</i> (Ewe Island)	31	20	10
<i>Eilean Tioram</i> (Dry Island)	8	8	-
<i>Eilean Thòiriosdal</i> (Horisdale Island)	46	37	6
<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) Vi	705	482	52
----- Ecclesiastic parishes (differing from areas above) ---			
<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	1,958	1,363	307
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom)	1,249	939	160
<i>Poll Iùbh</i> (Poolewe)	1,836	1,299	399
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch)	1,961	1,445	317
----- Census registration districts (differing from areas above) ---			
<i>Coigeach</i> (Coigach)	885	591	214
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom)	2,322	1,711	253
<i>Geàrrloch Tuathanach</i> (Gairloch Northern)	1,118	818	222
<i>Geàrrloch Deasach</i> (Gairloch Southern)	2,617	1,885	474
----- Electoral areas (differing from areas above) ---			
<i>Coigeach</i> (Coigach)	1,033	698	226
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom)	940	738	146
<i>Dùn Dà Dhòmhnail</i> (Dundonnell)	1,244	866	95
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch)	1,752	1,270	311
<i>Poll Iùbh</i> (Poolewe)	991	711	186
<i>Allt Bèithe</i> (Aultbea)	1,036	750	219
<b>1911</b>	<b>6,112</b>	<b>4,649</b>	<b>634</b>
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom) CP	2,794	2,098	231
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch) CP	3,318	2,551	403
<b>1921</b>	<b>5,099</b>	<b>3,847</b>	<b>330</b>
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom) CP	2,318	1,637	115
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch) CP	2,781	2,210	215
<b>1931</b>	<b>4,380</b>	<b>3,316</b>	<b>150</b>
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom) CP	2,004	1,406	33
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch) CP	2,376	1,910	117

**Table 17: Number of persons speaking Gàidhlig between 1901 and 1931 – selected areas (civil or ecclesiastic parishes, census registration districts, electoral areas, villages or inhabited islands) in Loch Bhraoin & Geàrrloch**



<b>Gaelic and Gaelic only between 1951 and 1971: Loch Bhraoin &amp; Geàrrloch</b>	Total Popula- tion	Gàidhlig and Eng- lish	Gàidhlig but no English
<b>Census/Selected Area</b>			
<b>1951</b>	3,439	2,063	7
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom) CP	1,448	785	2
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch) CP	1,991	1,278	5
<b>1961</b>	3,277	1,570	1
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom) CP	1,489	596	-
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch) CP	1,788	974	1
----- County council electoral divisions (differing from areas above) ---			
<i>Ulapul &amp; Dùn Dà Dhòmhnaill</i> (Ullapool & Dundonnell) CCED	1,137	413	-
<i>Coigeach</i> (Coigach) CCED	352	183	-
<i>Poll Iùbh</i> (Poolewe) CCED	1,001	530	-
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch) CCED	760	434	-
----- Included in CP but not part of any CCED above ---			
<i>Diabaig a Tuath &amp; A'Chreag</i> (Diabaig North & Craig)	27	10	1
<b>1971<sup>20</sup></b>	3,354	1,215	*
<i>Loch Bhraoin</i> (Lochbroom) CP	1,565	425	*
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch) CP	1,795	790	*
----- County council electoral divisions (differing from areas above) ---			
<i>Ulapul &amp; Dùn Dà Dhòmhnaill</i> (Ullapool & Dundonnell) CCED	1,280	310	*
<i>Coigeach</i> (Coigach) CCED	285	115	*
<i>Poll Iùbh</i> (Poolewe) CCED	975	435	*
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch) CCED	775	345	*

**Table 18: Number of persons speaking Gàidhlig between 1951 and 1971 – selected areas (civil parishes or county council electoral divisions) in Loch Bhraoin & Geàrrloch**

<b>Number of persons and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in former County Council Electoral Divisions (Ross &amp; Cromarty and Inverness-shire) (Population aged 3 years and over)</b>						
<b>Area</b>	<b>1961/71 Code</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>
<i>Coigeach</i> (Coigach CCED)	CG	183 54.6 %	115 41.8 %	109 41.4 %	63 17.8 %	53 12.9 %
<i>Ulapul &amp; Ach' Dà Dhòmhnaill</i> (Ullapool & Dundonnell CCED)	UD	413 38.2 %	310 25.8 %	290 21.0 %	199 10.4 %	195 10.9 %
<i>Geàrrloch (Poll Iùbh)</i> (Gairloch (Poolewe) CCED)	GP	530 55.2 %	435 46.5 %	325 39.3 %	263 26.6 %	174 16.2 %
<i>Geàrrloch</i> (Gairloch CCED)	GA	434 59.5 %	345 46.3 %	313 38.2 %	236 20.7 %	188 16.4 %

**Table 19: 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>20</sup> Due to rounding of figures to the nearest 0 and 5 it is impossible to provide exact "Gaelic only" numbers in 1971.



<b>Loch Bhraoin: Gàidhlig-speaking in Age Groups (1971-2001)</b>								
Age group	1971		1981		1991		2001	
0-2 <sup>21</sup>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	2.5 %
3-4	5	10.0 %	1	2.7 %	3	4.8 %	8	12.3 %
5-24	20	4.8 %	80	15.0 %	38	6.7 %	69	13.6 %
25-44	80	20.5 %	69	15.8 %	35	4.5 %	43	7.1 %
45-64	155	41.3 %	124	28.5 %	92	17.5 %	60	9.4 %
65 +	165	66.0 %	125	47.5 %	91	27.2 %	68	17.3 %
<b>Total (3 +)</b>	425	28.8 %	399	24.3 %	262	11.5 %	248	11.2 %
<b>Born in Scotland</b>	n/a	n/a	377	29.6 %	247	17.0 %	225	14.8 %

**Table 20: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in different age groups in Loch Bhraoin (Lochbroom) according to data from 1971 to 2001**

<b>Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers<sup>22</sup></b>							
<b>Loch Bhraoin</b>							
Map No	Census output area <sup>23</sup>	1981		1991		2001	
01	<i>Aichillidh Bhuidhe</i> (Achiltibuie)	54	45.6 %	20	15.1 %	9	6.6 %
02	<i>An t-Alltan Dubh</i> (Altandhu)	39	42.2 %	29	26.2 %	21	15.7 %
03	<i>A'Mhòr Choille</i> (Morefield)	16	25.4 %	14	11.6 %	23	14.5 %
	<i>Inbhir Pollaidh</i> (Inverpolly)	9	32.0 %				
04	<i>Bruthaichean Ulapuil</i> (Braes of Ullapool)	10	18.4 %	6	6.6 %	7	7.1 %
05	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) 1a	27	17.7 %	15	14.7 %	8	11.6 %
06	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) 1b			10	10.3 %	7	3.7 %
07	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) 2a	68	24.9 %	16	11.7 %	17	14.8 %
08	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) 2b			17	11.6 %	19	13.7 %
09	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) 3a	62	21.2 %	17	17.9 %	43	15.3 %
	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) 3c			10	13.0 %		
10	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) 3b			11	10.0 %	6	8.0 %
	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) 3d			7	8.7 %		
11	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) 4a	20	11.3 %	5	3.3 %	9	6.3 %
12	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) 4c			18	13.5 %		
13	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) 4b			8	9.6 %	4	5.8 %
14	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool) 4d			17	12.2 %	9	9.7 %
15	<i>Leac Mhailm</i> (Leckmelm)	16	22.1 %	7	7.1 %	5	5.3 %
16	<i>An Leitir</i> (Letters)	28	39.7 %	21	24.7 %	21	21.7 %
17	<i>Sgoraig</i> (Scoraig)	17	15.7 %	12	9.8 %	11	8.9 %
18	<i>Bada Call</i> (Badcaul)	33	39.5 %	20	17.0 %	13	9.6 %

**Table 21: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers for the census output areas in Loch Bhraoin (Lochbroom) according to data from 1981 to 2001**

<sup>21</sup> Information only available since 2001.

<sup>22</sup> Statistical base is the population aged 3 years and over for 1981 and 1991 and the total population in 2001.

<sup>23</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.



Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers <sup>24</sup> <i>Taobh Siar Rois: Geàrrloch</i>							
Map No	Census output area <sup>25</sup>	1981		1991		2001	
19	<i>Earradal Shuas</i> (South Erradale)	53	37.9 %	52	34.2 %	25	18.1 %
20	<i>Bad a`Chròtha</i> (Badachro)	10	15.2 %	14	13.7 %	4	6.9 %
21	<i>An Aird</i> (Aird)	38	23.5 %	14	12.4 %	11	10.9 %
22	<i>Uachdar Chàirn</i> (Auchtercairn)					15	15.8 %
23	<i>An Srath</i> (Strath)					11	11.8 %
24	<i>Baile Ghobhainn</i> (Smithstown)	110	34.3 %	34	27.3 %	28	24.8 %
25	<i>An Lòn Mòr</i> (Lonemore)			22	18.3 %	26	19.9 %
26	<i>Mitheall</i> (Mial)			21	15.0 %	16	12.0 %
27	<i>Mealbhaig</i> (Melvaig)			26	36.8 %	17	27.9 %
28	<i>Earradal Shìos</i> (North Erradale)	72	48.6 %	22	22.6 %	13	13.4 %
29	<i>Ceann Loch Iùbh</i> (Kinlochewe)	30	23.4 %	20	13.1 %	22	14.2 %
30	<i>Poll Iùbh</i> (Poolewe) a	52	27.6 %	22	21.6 %	13	10.2 %
31	<i>Poll Iùbh</i> (Poolewe) b			8	8.1 %	12	8.1 %
32	<i>Inbhir Asdail</i> (Inverasdale)	64	47.4 %	19	26.4 %	15	17.9 %
33	<i>An Uaghaidh</i> (Cove)			36	34.7 %	14	15.9 %
34	<i>Allt Beithe</i> (Aultbea)	106	42.0 %	58	39.9 %	26	15.7 %
35	<i>Meallan Theàrlaich</i> (Mellon Charles)			25	23.1 %	28	25.0 %
36	<i>Druim a`Choirce</i> (Drumchork)			47	31.1 %	18	27.7 %
37	<i>An Leathad</i> (Laide)	47	31.1 %	33	36.4 %	14	18.2 %
38	<i>Meallan Ùdraigil</i> (Mellon Udrigle)	55	46.6 %	24	23.5 %	18	17.0 %
39	<i>Sannda</i> (Sand)			20	38.5 %	11	14.1 %

Table 22: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers for the census output areas in *Geàrrloch* (Gairloch) according to data from 1981 to 2001

<i>Geàrrloch: Gàidhlig-speaking in Age Groups (1971-2001)</i>								
Age group	1971		1981		1991		2001	
<b>0-2</b> <sup>26</sup>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	3.0 %
<b>3-4</b>	10	20.0 %	3	5.8 %	5	8.5 %	5	14.7 %
<b>5-24</b>	80	18.4 %	82	17.2 %	60	10.4 %	63	12.7 %
<b>25-44</b>	170	40.0 %	129	28.5 %	95	16.7 %	55	10.1 %
<b>45-64</b>	260	56.5 %	195	45.8 %	169	31.0 %	96	14.3 %
<b>65 +</b>	270	78.3 %	231	67.7 %	170	44.4 %	143	30.0 %
<b>Total (3 +)</b>	780	45.5 %	638	36.5 %	499	23.5 %	362	16.3 %
<b>Born in Scotland</b>	n/a	n/a	616	43.2 %	481	29.7 %	337	21.9 %

Table 23: Number and percentage of Gàidhlig-speakers in different age groups in *Geàrrloch* (Gairloch) according to data from 1971 to 2001

<sup>24</sup> Statistical base is the population aged 3 years and over for 1981 and 1991 and the total population in 2001.

<sup>25</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>26</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>Aichillidh Bhuidhe</i> (Achiltibuie)	1	2.9 %	21	15.3 %	- 12.4 %	22.1 %
02	<i>Alltan Dubh</i> (Altandhu)	10	23.8 %	37	27.6 %	- 3.8 %	32.3 %
03	<i>A`Mhòr Choille</i> (Morefield)	9	17.7 %	35	22.0 %	- 4.3 %	27.0 %
04	<i>Bruthaichean Ulapuil</i> (Braes of Ullapool)	5	27.8 %	13	13.1 %	+ 14.7 %	20.0 %
05	<i>Ulapul 1a</i> (Ullapool) 1a	4	40.0 %	11	15.9 %	+ 24.1 %	20.9 %
06	<i>Ulapul 1b</i> (Ullapool) 1b	3	5.6 %	13	6.8 %	- 1.2 %	9.8 %
07	<i>Ulapul 2a</i> (Ullapool) 2a	7	33.3 %	29	25.2 %	+ 8.1 %	28.6 %
08	<i>Ulapul 2b</i> (Ullapool) 2b	6	15.0 %	28	20.1 %	- 5.1 %	22.6 %
09	<i>Ulapul 3a</i> (Ullapool) 3a	11	16.4 %	57	20.3 %	- 3.9 %	25.2 %
10	<i>Ulapul 3b</i> (Ullapool) 3b	1	4.4 %	10	13.3 %	- 8.9 %	17.2 %
11	<i>Ulapul 4a</i> (Ullapool) 4a	9	13.9 %	17	11.9 %	+ 2.0 %	13.5 %
12	<i>Ulapul 4b</i> (Ullapool) 4b	12	21.8 %	29	21.9 %	- 0.1 %	24.8 %
13	<i>Ulapul 4c</i> (Ullapool) 4c	3	15.8 %	6	8.7 %	+ 7.1 %	11.8 %
14	<i>Ulapul 4d</i> (Ullapool) 4d	5	21.7 %	16	17.2 %	+ 4.5 %	22.9 %
15	<i>Leac Mhailm</i> (Leckmelm)	1	4.6 %	9	9.5 %	- 4.9 %	11.1 %
16	<i>Leitir</i> (Letters)	12	38.7 %	31	32.0 %	+ 6.7 %	40.9 %
17	<i>Sgoraig</i> (Scoraig)	5	11.1 %	18	14.5 %	- 3.4 %	19.0 %
18	<i>Bada Call</i> (Badcaul)	1	3.1 %	26	19.1 %	- 16.0 %	31.6 %

**Table 24: Intergenerational viability and Gàidhlig-speakers born in Scotland in Loch Bhraoin (Lochbroom) according to census data of 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)
19	<i>Earradal Shuas</i> (South Erradale)	7	20.6 %	46	33.3 %	<b>- 12.7 %</b>	<b>41.4 %</b>
20	<i>Bad a'Chròtha</i> (Badachro)	-	-	8	13.8 %	<b>- 13.8 %</b>	<b>20.6 %</b>
21	<i>An Aird</i> (Aird)	5	23.8 %	16	15.8 %	<b>+ 8.0 %</b>	<b>32.5 %</b>
22	<i>Uachdar Chàirn</i> (Auchtercairn)	3	9.1 %	19	20.0 %	<b>- 10.9 %</b>	<b>24.1 %</b>
23	<i>An Srath</i> (Strath)	3	8.8 %	16	15.2 %	<b>- 6.4 %</b>	<b>18.5 %</b>
24	<i>Baile Ghobhainn</i> (Smithtown)	6	23.1 %	31	27.4 %	<b>- 4.3 %</b>	<b>33.3 %</b>
25	<i>An Lòn Mòr</i> (Lonemore)	6	19.4 %	31	23.7 %	<b>- 4.3 %</b>	<b>30.9 %</b>
26	<i>Mitheall</i> (Mial)	5	11.9 %	24	18.1 %	<b>- 6.2 %</b>	<b>21.7 %</b>
27	<i>Mealbhaig</i> (Melvaig)	4	30.8 %	20	32.8 %	<b>- 2.0 %</b>	<b>48.6 %</b>
28	<i>Earradal Shios</i> (North Erradale)	2	10.0 %	27	27.8 %	<b>- 17.8 %</b>	<b>35.7 %</b>
29	<i>Ceann Loch Iùbh</i> (Kinlochewe)	7	14.6 %	27	17.4 %	<b>- 2.8 %</b>	<b>21.6 %</b>
30	<i>Poll Iùbh a</i> (Poolewe) a	5	14.3 %	23	18.1 %	<b>- 3.8 %</b>	<b>20.8 %</b>
31	<i>Poll Iùbh b</i> (Poolewe) b	4	9.5 %	20	13.4 %	<b>- 3.9 %</b>	<b>19.8 %</b>
32	<i>Inbhir Asdail</i> (Inverasdale)	6	28.6 %	25	29.8 %	<b>- 1.2 %</b>	<b>32.9 %</b>
33	<i>An Uaghaidh</i> (Cove)	5	18.5 %	20	22.7 %	<b>- 4.2 %</b>	<b>24.6 %</b>
34	<i>Allt Beithe</i> (Aultbea)	5	9.8 %	39	23.5 %	<b>- 13.7 %</b>	<b>30.3 %</b>
35	<i>Meallan Thearlaich</i> (Mellon Charles)	4	15.4 %	35	31.3 %	<b>- 15.9 %</b>	<b>42.2 %</b>

**Table 25: Intergenerational viability and Gàidhlig-speakers born in Scotland in Gearrloch (Gairloch) according to census data of 2001 – Part A**



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)
36	<i>Druim a'Choirce</i> (Drumchork)	2	9.1 %	29	25.2 %	<b>- 16.1 %</b>	<b>37.7 %</b>
37	<i>An Leathad</i> (Laide)	2	14.3 %	22	28.6 %	<b>- 14.3 %</b>	<b>40.0 %</b>
38	<i>Meallan Udraigil</i> (Mellon Udrigle)	3	10.7 %	28	26.4 %	<b>- 15.7 %</b>	<b>34.7 %</b>
39	<i>Sannda</i> (Sand)	2	11.1 %	13	16.7 %	<b>- 5.6 %</b>	<b>24.0 %</b>

**Table 26: Intergenerational viability and Gàidhlig-speakers born in Scotland in Geàrrloch (Gairloch) according to census data of 2001 – Part B**



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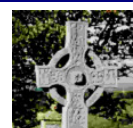
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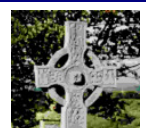
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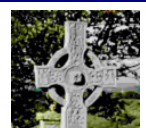
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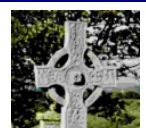
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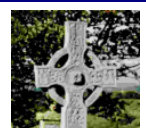
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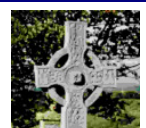
### III. Some Valuable Comments about Census Information

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 neither, 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” 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>Loch a’Bhraoin – Part A</i>				
Map No.	Census output area	Area Codes		
		1961 1971	1981 1991	2001
01	<i>Aichillidh Bhuidhe</i> (Achiltibuie), <i>Bad an Sgàlaidh</i> (Badenscallie), <i>Am Poll Glas</i> (Polglass), <i>Bad an Tairbeirt</i> (Badantarbat), <i>Achadh nan Càrnan</i> (Achnacarnan), <i>Na h-Eileanan Samhraidh</i> (Summer Isles)	CG	25AW10 25AW09 25AW11 25AW12	60QT000269
02	<i>Alltan Dubh</i> (Altandhu), <i>Am Poll Bàn</i> (Polbain), <i>An Rif</i> (Reiff), <i>Dòrnaidh</i> (Dornie), <i>Bad an Tairbeirt</i> (Badantarbat)	CG	25AW13	60QT001341
03	<i>A’Mhòr Choille</i> (Morefield), <i>Srath Canaird</i> (Strathcanaird), <i>Achadh na h-Aird</i> (Achnahaird), <i>Loidse Langail</i> (Langwell Lodge), <i>Blaoghasairigh</i> (Blughasary), <i>An Rubha</i> (Rhue), <i>Inbhir Pollaidh</i> (Inverpolly), <i>Aird na Mara</i> (Ardmair), <i>Linne Raineach</i> (Linneraneach)	CG	25AW08 25AW14 25AX01	60QT000268
04	<i>Bruthaichean Ulapuil</i> (Braes of Ullapool), <i>Gleann Achail</i> (Glen Achall)	UD	25AW06 25AW07	60QT000267
05	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	UD	25AW01A	60QT001098
06	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	UD	25AW01B	60QT001099
07	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	UD	25AW02A	60QT001100
08	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	UD	25AW02B	60QT001101
09	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	UD	25AW03B	60QT001722
10	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	UD	25AW03D	60QT001102
11	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	UD	25AW04A	60QT001293
12	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	UD	25AW04A	60QT001294
13	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	UD	25AW04B	60QT001103
14	<i>Ulapul</i> (Ullapool)	UD	25AW04C	60QT001104

**Table A-1: List of locations within individual census output areas and official numbers for different census dates for *Loch a’Bhraoin – 1961-2001 – Part A***





Census Output Areas in <i>Loch a’Bhraoin – Part B</i>				
Map No.	Census output area	Area Codes		
		1961 1971	1981 1991	2001
15	<i>Leac Mhailm (Leckmelm), Tìr Alainn, Am Bràigh Mòr (Braemore), A’Ghlaic Odhar (Glackow), Inbhir Lathail (Inverlael), An Leitir Iùbh (Letterewe), An Coire Shalach (Corrieshalloch), Àird Cheatharnaich (Ardcharnich), An Ruigh Dhorcha (Rhidorroch)</i>	UD	25AT04	60QT001340
16	<i>An Leitir (Letters), Allt na h-Airbhe (Altnaharrie), Blàr na Leitheach (Blarnaleavoch), Àird na Dreaghainn (Ardindrean), Achadh an Dreaghainn (Auchindrean), Achadh Lùinneachain (Achluinachan), Inbhir Bhraoin (Inverbroom), An Ruigh Ruadh (Rhiroy), An Lagaidh (Loggie)</i>	UD	25AT05	60QT000264
17	<i>Càrnach, Sgoraig (Scoraig), Ach’ Dà Dhòmhnail (Dundonnell), Eilean Darach, Am Bad Railleach (Badrallach)</i>	UD	25AT06	60QT000265
18	<i>Bada Call (Badcaul), Camas nan Gall (Camusnagaul), Am Bad Luachrach (Badluachrach), Àird Easaidh (Ardessie), Doire nam Muc (Dornamuck), Am Bad Bèithe (Badbea)</i>	UD	25AT07	60QT000266

**Table A-2: List of locations within individual census output areas and official numbers for different census dates for *Loch a’Bhraoin – 1961-2001 – Part B***

Census Output Areas in <i>Geàrrloch – Part A</i>				
Map No.	Census output area	Area Codes		
		1961 1971	1981 1991	2001
19	<i>Earradal Shuas (South Erradale), Portaigil (Port Henderson), Na h-Obanan (Opinan), An Àird (Aird), An Rubha Dearg (Redpoint), Bad an Inneil (Badantionail)</i>	GA	25AR01	60QT000245
20	<i>Bad a’Chròtha (Badachro), Sildeag (Shieldaig), Leac nan Saighead (Leacnasaide), A’Chathair Bheag (Kerrysdale), Eilean Thòiriosdal (Eilean Horrisdale)</i>	GA	25AR02 25AR03 25AR04	60QT001337
21	<i>An Àird Gheàrrloch (An Ard), Baile Theàrlaich (Charlestown), Am Baile Mòr (Flowerdale)</i>	GA	25AR05A	60QT001503
22	<i>Uachdar Chàirn (Auchtercairn)</i>	GA	25AR05A	60QT001504
23	<i>An Srath (Strath), Uachdar Chàirn (Auchtercairn)</i>	GA	25AR05B	60QT000246
24	<i>Baile Ghobhainn (Smithstown), An Srath (Strath)</i>	GA	25AR06A	60QT000247

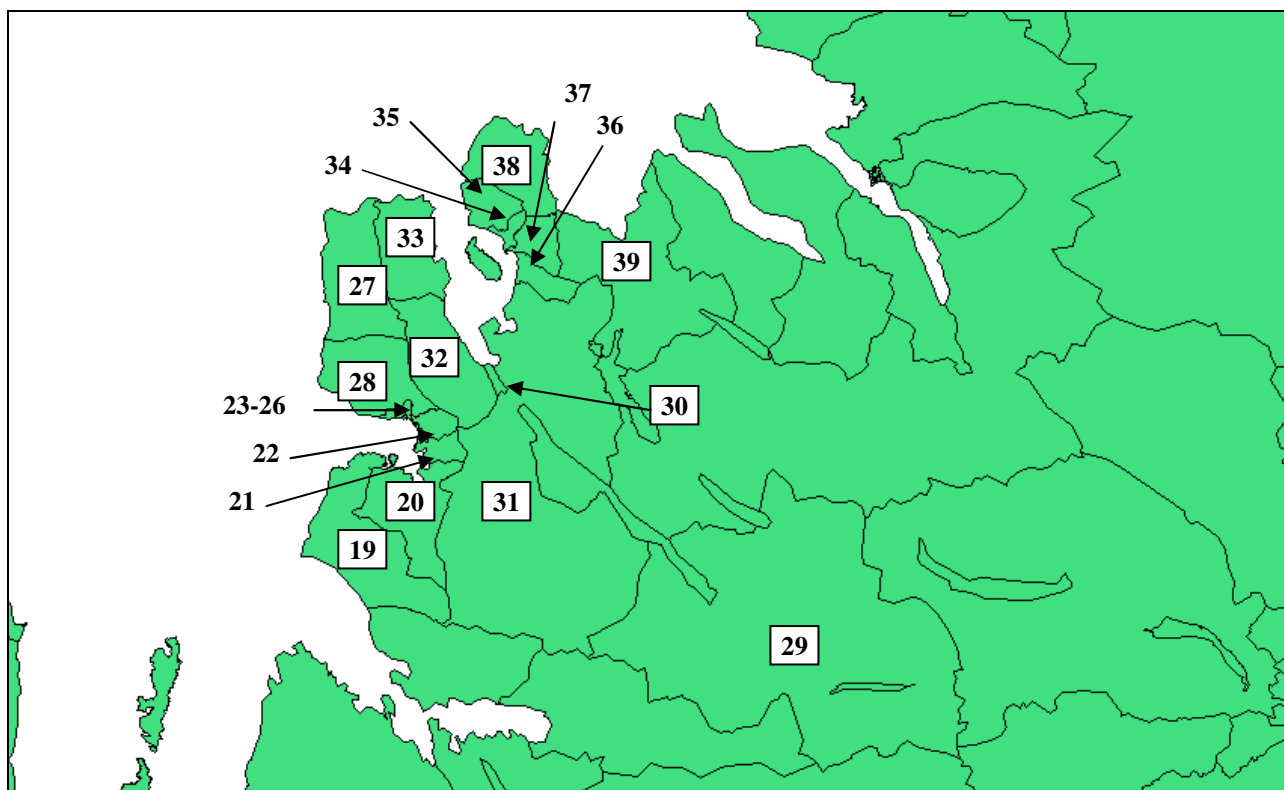
**Table A-3: List of locations within individual census output areas and official numbers for different census dates for *Geàrrloch – 1961-2001 – Part A***



Census Output Areas in Geàrrloch- Part B				
Map No.	Census output area	Area Codes		
		1961 1971	1981 1991	2001
25	<i>An Lòn Mòr (Lonemore), Baile Ghobhainn (Smithstown)</i>	GA	25AR06B	60QT000248
26	<i>Mitheall (Mial), An Srath (Strath)</i>	GA	25AR06C	60QT000249
27	<i>Mealbhaig (Melvaig), Allt Ghrìsean (Aultgrishan), Rubha Rèidh, Alltan Phàdraig (Peterburn)</i>	GA	25AR07A	60QT000250
28	<i>Earradal Shìos (North Erradale), Sannda Mhòr (Big Sand), Sannda Bheag (Little Sand), Carn Dearg</i>	GA	25AR07B	60QT000251
29	<i>Ceann Loch Iùbh (Kinlochewe), Achadh na Sine (Achnasheen), Leathad Ghobhainn (Ledgowan), Ath nan Ceann (Anancaun), Cromasaig, Loch a'Chroisg (Lochrosque), Bad a'Mhanaich (Badavanich)</i>	GA	25AS03	60QT000254
30	<i>Poll Iùbh (Poolewe)</i>	GP	25AS05A	60QT000255
31	<i>An Lòn Dubh (Londubh), Poll Iùbh (Poolewe), Inbhir Iùbh (Inverewe), Tùrnaig (Tournaig), Tollaidh (Tollie), Inbhirean (Inveran), Slèiteadal (Slattadale), Tealladal (Talladale), Loch Ma'Ruibhe (Loch Maree)</i>	GP	25AS05B 25AS04	60QT000256
32	<i>Inbhir Asdail (Inverasdale), Am Bràighe (Brae), Nàst (Naast), Bùra (Boor)</i>	GP	25AS10A	60QT000262
33	<i>An Uaghaidh (Cove), Inbhir Asdail (Inverasdale), Meallan a'Ghamhna (Mellangaun), Beinn Dòbhrain (Bendoran)</i>	GP	25AS10B	60QT000263
34	<i>Allt Bèithe (Aultbea), Buaille na Lùib (Bualnaluib), Ormasgaig (Ormiscaig), Taigh na Faoilinn (Tighnafiline)</i>	GP	25AS07A	60QT000259
35	<i>Meallan Theàrlaich (Mellon Charles)</i>	GP	25AS07B	60QT000260
36	<i>Druim a'Choirce (Drumchork), Allt Bèithe (Aultbea), Eilean Iùbh (Isle of Ewe)</i>	GP	25AS08A 25AS09	60QT001338
37	<i>An Leathad (Laide), Allt Bèithe (Aultbea), Taigh na Faoilinn (Tighnafiline), Am Bad Feàrna (Badfearn)</i>	GP	25AS08B	60QT000261
38	<i>Meallan Ùdraigil (Mellon Udrigle), An Leathad (Laide), Ùdraigil (Udrigle), Na h-Obanan (Opinan), Achadh Garbh (Achgarve)</i>	GP	25AS06A	60QT000257
39	<i>Sannda (Sand), An t-Eirthire Shìos (First Coast), An t-Eirthire Bhos (Second Coast), Gruinneard (Gruinard), Mungasdal (Mungasdale)</i>	GP	25AS06B	60QT000258

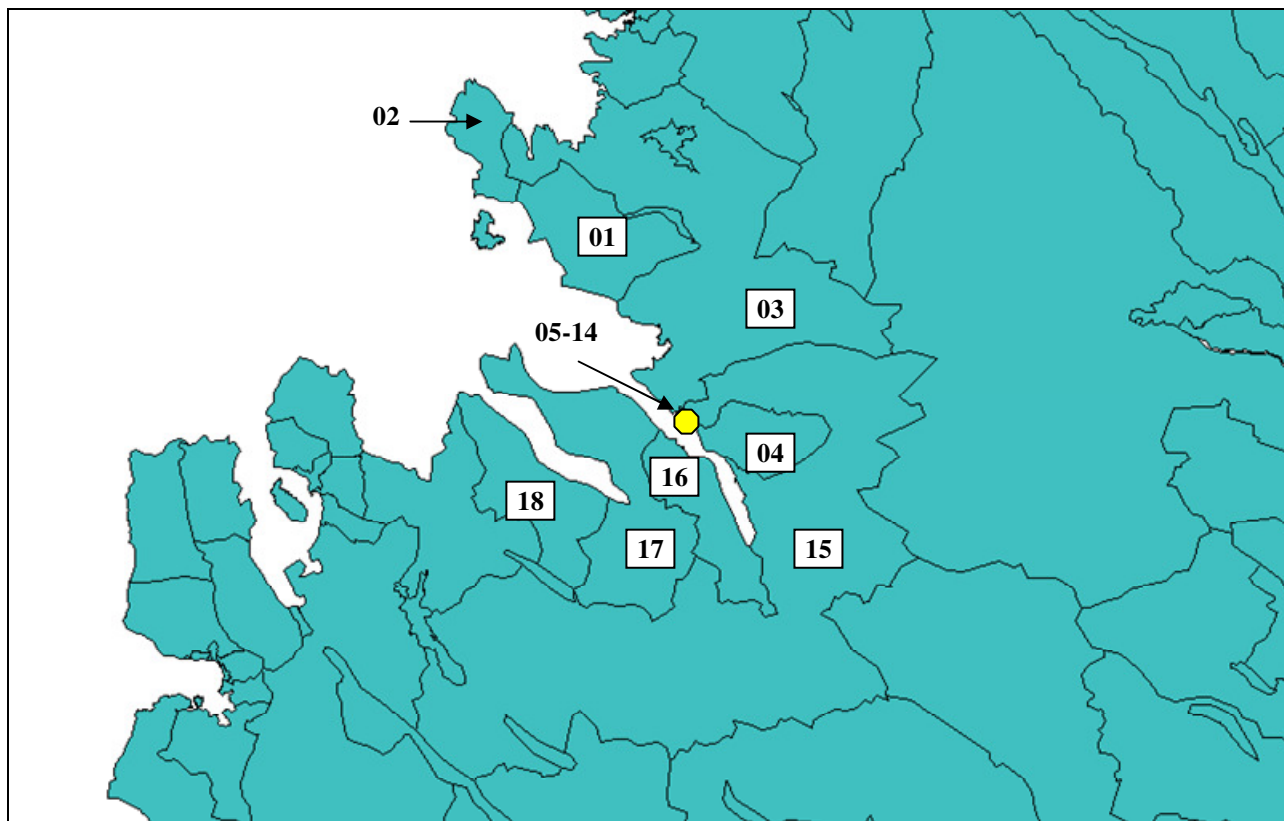
**Table A-4: List of locations within individual census output areas and official numbers for different census dates for Geàrrloch – 1961-2001 – Part B**





**Fig. 15: Overview map of census output areas for *Geàrrloch* - numbers are provided in tables A-3 and A-4**





**Fig. 16: Overview map of census output areas for *Loch Bhraoin* - numbers are provided in tables A-1 and A-2<sup>27</sup>**

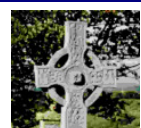
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## VII. List of Abbreviations

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	Gaelic medium education
GMU	Gaelic medium unit: Class(es) with Gaelic 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
Vi	Village according to census definition in 1881, 1891 and 1901





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