

***The Gaelic Crisis in the Vernacular
Community:
A Comprehensive Sociolinguistic Survey of
Scottish Gaelic***

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1. Research Aims

This research digest presents an overview of the key findings of our comprehensive sociolinguistic survey of the societal and spatial extent of Gaelic speakers and use of the language in the remaining communities in Scotland where Gaelic has a residual vernacular presence. The research provides a contemporary in-depth focus on the use and transmission of Scottish Gaelic as a communal language in the Western Isles, in Staffin in the Isle of Skye and in the Isle of Tiree in Argyll and Bute, as well as on Gaelic-speaking identity in these communities. We refer here to the main publication on which this digest is based as the *Gaelic Crisis*, and references throughout refer to the chapters of the book. This *Gaelic Crisis* emerges from the work of Soillse's Islands Gaelic Research Project, conducted between 2015 and 2017.

2. Key Finding

Within the remaining Gaelic vernacular communities of Scotland, the social use and transmission of Gaelic is at the point of collapse. This situation is evident through the various research modules and the overall findings of the Islands Gaelic Research Project. These reveal an ongoing demographic crisis, characterised firstly by a diminishing social density of Gaelic speakers; and secondly by a very low level of societal and familial transmission of Gaelic, which results in weak cross-generational practice of vernacular Gaelic. Both these factors are exacerbated by overall population decline.

***Staing na Gàidhlig anns a' Choimhearsnachd
Dhùthchasaich:
Làn-sgrùdadh Sòiseo-chànanach air Gàidhlig na h-
Alba***

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1. Amasan Rannsachaidh

Tha an geàrr-chunntas rannsachaidh seo a' toirt sùil air na prìomh thoraidhean a thàinig a-mach à sgrùdadh sòiseo-chànanach farsaing air an ìre chun a bheil Gàidhlig ga cleachdadh gu sòisealta anns na coimhearsnachdan mu dheireadh anns a bheil a' Ghàidhlig a' mairsinn gu dùthchasach. Tha an rannsachadh a' toirt sealladh domhainn agus co-aimsireil air cleachdadh na Gàidhlig agus air toirt seachad a' chànan dhan ath ghinealach mar chànan coimhearsnachd anns na h-Eileanan an Iar, ann an Stafainn san Eilean Sgitheanach agus ann an Tìrìodh. Tha e cuideachd a' gabhail beachd air fèin-aithne Ghàidhealach anns na coimhearsnachdan sin. 'S e *Gaelic Crisis* an t-ainm goirid a bhios againn air a' phrìomh fhoillseachadh air a bheil an geàrr-chunntas seo stèidhte. Tha an leabhar a' tighinn a-mach à obair Pròiseact Rannsachaidh Gàidhlig nan Eilean (*Islands Gaelic Research Project*) aig Soillse, a chaidh a thoirt gu buil eadar 2015 agus 2017.

2. Prìomh Thoradh

Anns na coimhearsnachdan dùthchasach Gàidhlig mu dheireadh ann an Alba, tha cleachdadh sòisealta na Gàidhlig agus toirt seachad a' chànan dhan ath ghinealach an ìmpis briseadh sìos. Tha an suidheachadh seo follaiseach tro na diofar modalan rannsachaidh agus ann an toraidhean a' phròiseict uile gu lèir. Tha iad seo a' toirt staing dheamagrafach leantainneach am follais. An lùib na stainge seo tha, sa chiad àite, lùghdachadh ann an dlùths sòisealta luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig; agus anns an dàrna àite, ìre gu math ìseal de thoirt seachad a' chànan dhan òigridh anns an teaghlach agus anns a' choimhearsnachd, rud a tha a' fàgail gu bheil cleachdadh na Gàidhlig eadar ginealaichean gu math lag. Tha crìonadh an t-sluaigh uile gu lèir a' cur gu mòr ris an dà dhuilgheadas seo.

Without a re-orientation of public policy and interventions focused at the community level, the present Gaelic vernacular group do not have the demographic or societal resources to sustain a communal presence in the islands beyond the next 10 years, except for isolated atypical networks of elderly speakers.

The greater levels of Gaelic ability in comparison to Gaelic practice among those living in the islands indicate a potential in the community for the more productive use of Gaelic in various social settings than is being realised in the current support and policy framework. Despite the troubling findings in this report, from a vernacular perspective, we should consider that these results depict the highest social densities and the strongest communal use of Gaelic still existing.

The research modules, especially those focusing on the younger generations, indicate:

- Low levels of ability in all dimensions of Gaelic competence in age cohorts under 50 years of age
- Marginal levels of use of the language across different social contexts
- Marginal presence of Gaelic in the young people's experience of primary and secondary schooling
- Common indifference among the young to the place of Gaelic in their lives
- A pessimistic perspective, but also somewhat contradictory opinions, on the future of Gaelic within families and communities in the islands
- The familial and communal transmission of Gaelic has been severely reduced by the predominance of English in these communities
- Gaelic-speaking social networks are a marginal aspect of life in the islands, except in the case of the older age cohorts.

3. Research Context

Gaelic is now effectively both a minority and a minoritised language in its remaining vernacular communities, most notably in the Western Isles. In the area covered by this research, only 52% of the resident population report an ability in Gaelic. Excepting the 50+ age cohort, a majority of the population do not report a competence in Gaelic in the 2011 Census.

Às aonais cruth-atharrachadh air poileasaidh poblach agus modhan-taic a tha cuimsichte aig ìre na coimhearsnachd, chan eil de ghoireasan deamagrafach no sòisealta aig an t-sluagh dhùthchasach Ghàidhlig gus an cumail a' dol mar choimhearsnachdan anns na h-eileanan seachad air na 10 bliadhna ri tighinn, taobh a-muigh lìonraidhean iomallach, neochumanta de luchd-labhairt aosta.

Tha na h-ìrean as àirde de chomas Gàidhlig ann an coimeas ri cleachdadh Gàidhlig am measg nan eileanach a' leigeil fhaicinn gum faodadh barrachd Gàidhlig a bhith ga cleachdadh nas fharsainge ann an caochladh shuidheachaidhean sòisealta na tha ga thoirt gu buil anns an fhrèam-obrach taic agus poileasaidh a tha ann an-dràsta. A dh'aindeoin nan toraidhean trioblaideach anns an aithisg seo bho shealladh dùthchasach, bu chòir beachdachadh gu bheil na toraidhean seo a' toirt am follais nan dlùthsan sòisealta as àirde agus an ìre as làidire a tha fhathast ri fhaighinn de chleachdadh na Gàidhlig ann an coimhearsnachdan.

Tha na modalan rannsachaidh, gu h-àraid an fheadhainn a tha a' cuimseachadh air na ginealaichean as òige, a' sealltainn:

- Ìrean ìseal anns a h-uile tomhas de chomas Gàidhlig ann am buidhnean aoise fo 50 bliadhna a dh'aois
- Ìrean gu math lag de chleachdadh a' chànain air feadh diofar cho-theacsaichean sòisealta
- Gàidhlig air an iomall ann am beatha na h-òigridh anns a' bhun-sgoil is anns an àrd-sgoil
- Tòrr òigridh coma mu àite na Gàidhlig nam beatha
- Sealladh eu-dòchasach, ach cuideachd beachdan a tha a' dol an aghaidh sin, mu chor na Gàidhlig taobh a-staigh theaghlaichean agus choimhearsnachdan anns an àm ri teachd
- Tha toirt seachad na Gàidhlig anns an teaghlach is anns a' choimhearsnachd air a lagachadh gu mòr agus làmh an uachdair aig a' Bheurla anns na coimhearsnachdan seo
- 'S e eileamaid glè bheag de bheatha dhaoine anns na h-eileanan a tha anns na lìonraidhean sòisealta Gàidhlig, ach a-mhàin anns na buidhnean aoise as sine.

3. Co-theacsa Rannsachaidh

Tha a Ghàidhlig mar mhion-chànan agus na cànan iomallaichte anns na h-Eileanan Siar, anns a' choimhearsnachd dhùthchasaich mu dheireadh ann an Alba. Anns an sgìre far a bheil an rannsachadh seo stèidhte, tha 52% den t-sluagh chòmhnaidh ag aithris gu bheil comas aca ann an Gàidhlig. Taobh a-muigh na buidhne aoise 50+, tha a' mhòr-chuid den t-sluagh ag ràdh nach eil comas Gàidhlig aca ann an Cunntas-sluaigh 2011.

In addition, Gaelic represents a minoritised formal or institutionalised identity in these communities, in that virtually all formal or institutional activity accedes to the functional primacy of English, except for specific Gaelic-medium activity in education and broadcasting.

From a former situation of minority-language regional dominance, the communal practice of Gaelic has now been reduced to a state of residual use in an unbalanced dynamic of 'uni-directional' bilingualism, in which all native Gaelic speakers also have a high competence in English, but the vast majority of native English speakers have no competence in Gaelic, resulting in the functional dominance of English in most social contexts.

This transformation can be traced through the second half of the 20th Century up to the present. This research situates the Gaelic-speaking community of the Western Isles on an advanced point on the timeline of bilingual contact with monolingual English speakers in local and wider social networks in which the English language predominates.

Among the other obstacles, the 'traditional' society (i.e. the societal context supporting the social practice of Gaelic) has been unable to combine socio-economic modernity with continued social vitality of Gaelic language and culture. Instead, the peripheral rural minority-language group has been gradually subsumed into the dominant group.

The multi-modular approach to the *Gaelic Crisis* research provides base-line data for informing strategies to address the following issues:

- Long-standing evidence of the islands' fragile demography
- The failure to integrate language policy and planning in socioeconomic development strategies
- Public policy and development funding priorities to date have been insufficient, and inadequately targeted, to counteract the social demise of the Gaelic speaker group
- The societal irrelevance of current language policy provision has contributed to a form of paralysis and stagnation both within the community and in official bodies

A bharrachd air seo, 's e fèin-aithne iomallaichte ann an suidheachaidhean foirmeil no institiuideach a th' anns a' Ghàidhlig, leis gu bheil cha mhòr a h-uile gnìomh foirmeil no institiuideach a' gabhail ri prìomhachas practaigeach na Beurla, ach a-mhàin gnìomhan sònraichte tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig ann an raointean an fhoghlaim agus a' chraolaidh.

Bho shuidheachadh anns an àm a dh'fhalbh far an robh làmh an uachdair aig a' mhìon-chànan anns an sgìre, tha cleachdadh na Gàidhlig anns a' choimhearsnachd a-nis air a lùghdachadh gu staid iarmadach ann an suidheachadh mì-chothromach de dhà-chànanachas 'aon-taobhach', far a bheil deagh chomas anns a' Bheurla aig luchd-labhairt dùthchasach na Gàidhlig, ach gun chomas sam bith ann an Gàidhlig a bhith aig a' mhòr-mhòr-chuid de luchd-labhairt dùthchasach na Beurla. Tha seo a' fàgail gum bi làmh an uachdair aig a' Bheurla anns a' mhòr-chuid de shuidheachaidhean neo-fhoirmeil is sòisealta.

Faodar an cruth-atharrachadh seo a lorg tron dàrna leth den 20mh linn suas chun an latha an-diugh. Tha an rannsachadh seo a' suidheachadh coimhearsnachd Ghàidhlig nan Eilean Siar aig puing gu math fada air adhart air loidhne-ama de chonaltradh dà-chànanach ri luchd-labhairt aon-chànanach na Beurla ann an lìonraidhean sòisealta ionadail agus nas fharsainge anns a bheil làmh an uachdair aig a' Bheurla.

Am measg nan cnapan-starraidh eile, cha deach aig a' chomann-sòisealta 'traidiseanta' ('s e sin an co-theacs sòisealta a tha a' cumail suas cleachdadh sòisealta na Gàidhlig) air adhartas sòiseo-eaconamach a chur còmhla ri beòthalachd shòisealta leantainneach do chànan agus dualchas nan Gàidheal. An àite sin, chaidh an sluagh mìon-chànain iomallach dùthchail a shùghadh a-steach mean air mhean dhan t-sluagh cheannasach.

Tha modh ioma-mhodalach an rannsachaidh a tha an lùib an leabhair *Gaelic Crisis* a' toirt seachad dàta bunaiteach air an gabh ro-innleachdan stèidheachadh gus a dhol an sàs ris na trioblaidean a leanas:

- Fianais rè ùine fhada gu bheil deamografaidh nan eilean gu math cugallach
- Dìth soirbheis a thaobh a bhith a' fighe poileasaidh is planadh cànan a-steach ann an ro-innleachdan leasachaidh sòiseo-eaconamach
- Tha prìomhachasan maoinachaidh ann am poileasaidh is leasachadh poblach gu ruige seo air a bhith ro lag, agus air an cuimseachadh ann an dòigh mhì-fhreagarrach, airson cur an aghaidh crìonadh sòisealta sluagh na Gàidhlig
- Tha neo-bhuntainneas sòisealta an t-solarachaidh làthaireil a thaobh poileasaidh cànan air cur ri nàdar de phairilis agus de stadachd an dà chuid aig ìre na coimhearsnachd agus ann am buidhnean oifigeil

- The lack of engagement with the social reality of Gaels, as a distinct group, has induced a neutral and evasive response to the ongoing trajectory of decline.
- Leis nach eilear a' dol an sàs ri fìor shuidheachadh sòisealta nan Gàidheal, mar shluagh fa leth, thathar a' toirt seachad fhreagairtean neo-phàirteil agus seachantach do phàtran leantainneach a' chrionaidh.

4. Methodology

The research was carried out within the tradition of mainstream sociolinguistic enquiry, with a comprehensive multi-modular methodology providing an integrated analysis of the context in which Gaelic is spoken as a vernacular community language.

This methodology combined a series of surveys and community consultations as the basis for forming a diagnosis and prognosis of future prospects for Gaelic in the islands.

Two surveys were conducted throughout the research area: one investigating the preschool age group and the other focusing on the late-teenage cohort, conducted in the four secondary schools in the Western Isles. Two other surveys concentrated on gathering detailed data on three specific areas within the islands. Three small island communities (Scalpay, Grimsay and Eriskay) were selected in which comparatively higher densities of Gaelic competence were indicated by 2011 Census data. These modules provide detailed sociolinguistic profiles of the strongest remaining Gaelic communities in the islands.

The qualitative aspects of the study are based on eight focus group meetings conducted in the four secondary schools in the Western Isles, and a series of thirteen public consultations across the research area of the Western Isles, Tìre and Staffin. The research approach enabled cross-comparison of the results from all of these modules to produce the baseline evidence which illustrates the reality of Gaelic familial and community practice at a far more fine-grained level of detail than the National Census of Scotland can provide.

4. Modhan Rannsachaidh

Chaidh an rannsachadh a thoirt gu buil taobh a-staigh traidisean farsaing an t-sòiseo-chànanachais, le modhan rannsachaidh ioma-mhodalach farsaing a tha a' toirt seachad sgrùdadh co-aonaichte air a' cho-theacsa anns a bheil Gàidhlig ga bruidhinn mar chànan coimhearsnachd dùthchasach.

Ghabh na modhan rannsachaidh seo a-steach sreath de shuirbhidhean agus de cho-chomhairleachaidhean coimhearsnachd mar bhonn-stèidh airson a bhith ag aithneachadh gu mionaideach an t-suidheachaidh anns a bheil a' Ghàidhlig anns na h-eileanan agus na tha an dàn dhi san àm ri teachd.

Rinneadh dà shuirbhidh air feadh na sgìre rannsachaidh: aonan ag amas air buidheann-aoise nan sgoiltean-àraich agus am fear eile a' cuimseachadh air buidheann nan deugairean as sine, a thugadh gu buil anns na ceithir àrd-sgoiltean anns na h-Eileanan Siar. B' e amas an dà shuirbhidh eile dàta mionaideach a chruinneachadh air trì sgìrean sònraichte nan eilean. Chaidh trì sgìrean sònraichte anns na h-Eileanan Siar, (Sgalpaigh na Hearadh, Griomasaigh agus Èirisgeidh), a thaghadh anns an robh dlùths nas àirde de chomas Gàidhlig, an taca ri sgìrean eile, ri fhaicinn ann an dàta a' Chunntais-shluaigh ann an 2011. Tha na modalan rannsachaidh seo a' toirt seachad proifilean sòiseo-chànanach mionaideach de na coimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig as làidire a tha air am fàgail anns na h-eileanan.

Tha eileamaidean càileachdail an rannsachaidh stèidhte air ochd coinneamhan le buidhnean fòcais a chaidh a chumail anns na ceithir àrd-sgoiltean anns na h-Eileanan Siar, agus sreath de thrì deug co-chomhairleachaidhean poblach air feadh nan sgìrean rannsachaidh gu lèir anns na h-Eileanan Siar, ann an Tìriodh agus ann an Stafainn. Tha na modhan rannsachaidh seo a' leigeil leinn coimeas pongail a dhèanamh eadar na toraidhean bho na modalan seo air fad gus an fhianais bhunaiteach fhaighinn a tha a' leigeil fhaicinn fìor shuidheachadh cleachdadh na Gàidhlig ann an teaghlaichean is ann an coimhearsnachdan aig ìre fada nas mionaidiche na 's urrainn do Chunntas-sluaigh Nàiseanta na h-Alba a thoirt seachad.

5. Gaelic demolinguistics and census data (Chapter 2)

Chapter 2 in the *Gaelic Crisis* provides detailed analysis of census data from 1951 to 2011, and especially from 1981 onwards, revealing the following patterns:

- The rapid demolinguistic contraction of the Gaelic speaker group since 1981
- The loss of capacity of the speaker group to regenerate itself
- Of the resident population aged 3+, 52% of people at the 2011 Census reported an ability to speak Gaelic compared to 80% at the 1981 Census
- The 2011 Census also showed that 44% of the 18 to 49 age cohort reported an ability to speak Gaelic across the research area
- Over the 1981-2011 period, there has been a faster rate of decline of those in the 3-17 age cohort with an ability in Gaelic in comparison to those aged 50+
- The census data is the most positive depiction of the prevalence of Gaelic, providing an over-optimistic view of the current reality of the Gaelic speaking community
- There is approximately a 30%-point gap between speaker ability data (Chapter 2) and Gaelic household use data (cp. Chapters 5 and 6). In other words, the use of Gaelic in households is much weaker than the level of Gaelic ability in these communities
- The speaker group is transitioning from a phase of **residual** communal language use in which more than 25% of family households use Gaelic within a population of at least 58% Gaelic speakers, to the critical situation where less than 15% of family households use Gaelic and less than 45% of the resident population within the area are able to speak Gaelic
- This nexus of 15% family use / 45% ability denotes the **moribund** phase in which Gaelic is largely restricted to marginal aspects of community life, institutional practice and to the elderly age cohorts
- Within the next ten years, most of the communities will be at or will have entered the **moribund** phase on current trajectories

5. Deama-chànanachas na Gàidhlig agus dàta bhon chunntas-sluaigh (Caibideil 2)

Tha Caibideil 2 ann an *Gaelic Crisis* a' toirt seachad sgrùdadh mionaideach air dàta bho na cunntasan-sluaigh bho 1951 gu 2011, agus gu h-àraid bho 1981 air adhart. Tha na pàtranan a leanas a' tighinn am follais:

- Crìonadh deama-chànanach luath sluaigh na Gàidhlig bho 1981
- Call ann an comas an luchd-bruidhne iad fhèin athghintinn
- A-mach às an t-sluaigh chòmhnaidh os cionn 3 bliadhna a dh'aois, bha 52% de dhaoine ann an Cunntas-sluaigh 2011 ag innse gun robh iad comasach Gàidhlig a bhruidhinn an taca ri 80% ann an Cunntas-sluaigh 1981
- Tha Cunntas-sluaigh 2011 cuideachd a' sealltainn nach robh ach 44% den bhuidhinn aoise 18 gu 49 ag innse gun robh comas bruidhinn na Gàidhlig aca air feadh na sgìre rannsachaidh
- Thairis air na bliadhnaichean 1981 gu 2011, bha an crìonadh na bu luaithe anns a' bhuidhinn aoise 3 gu 17 aig a bheil comas Gàidhlig an taca ris an fheadhainn os cionn 50 bliadhna a dh'aois
- 'S e fiosrachadh a' chunntais-shluaigh an dealbh as dearbhaiche de neart na Gàidhlig, agus e a' toirt seachad sealladh ro dhòchasach air cor na Gàidhlig mar chànan coimhearsnachd san latha an-diugh
- Tha beàrn timcheall air 30 puing % eadar dàta air comas an luchd-labhairt (Caibideil 2) agus cleachdadh na Gàidhlig ann an dachaighean (Caibideilean 5 agus 6). Tha seo a' ciallachadh gu bheil cleachdadh na Gàidhlig anns an dachaigh fada nas laige na an ìre de chomas Gàidhlig anns na coimhearsnachdan seo
- Tha sluaigh a' chànain a' gluasad bho shuidheachadh de chleachdadh **iarmaidach** a' chànain anns a' choimhearsnachd anns a bheil còrr is 25% de dhachaighean teaghlaich a' cleachdadh na Gàidhlig am broinn sluaigh de cho-dhiù 58% de luchd-labhairt Gàidhlig, chun an t-suidheachaidh èiginnich anns a bheil nas lugha na 15% de dhachaighean teaghlaich a' cleachdadh na Gàidhlig agus nas lugha na 45% den t-sluaigh chòmhnaidh anns an sgìre comasach air Gàidhlig a bhruidhinn
- Tha an nasgadh seo de 15% cleachdadh teaghlaich / 45% comas a' comharrachadh an t-suidheachaidh **neo-bheòthail** anns nach eil Gàidhlig ga cleachdadh ach ann an suidheachaidhean neo-chudromach ann am beatha na coimhearsnachd, ann an cleachdadh institiuideach agus anns na buidhnean aoise as sine
- Taobh a-staigh nan deich bliadhna ri tighinn, bidh a' chuid as motha de na coimhearsnachdan anns an t-suidheachadh **neo-bheòthail**, no an ìmpis a dhol a-steach ann, a-rèir mar a tha cùisean a' dol an-dràsta

- The future social practice and transmission of Gaelic will soon become non-viable, without substantial and dynamic revival efforts.
- Bidh cleachdadh agus toirt seachad na Gàidhlig gu sòisealta anns an àm ri teachd eu-comasach a dh'aithghearr, gun oidhirpean ath-bheòthachaidh susbainteach agus smiorail.

As discussed in detail in Chapter 2 of the book, census data for the period 1981–2011 show a continued decline in the number of Gaelic speakers resident in the study districts covered by this research, as illustrated in **Figure 1**.

Mar a tha air a mhìneachadh ann an Caibideil 2 san leabhar, tha fiosrachadh a' chunntais-shluaigh eadar 1981 agus 2011 a' sealltainn crìonadh leantainneach ann an àireimh luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig a tha a' gabhail còmhnaidh anns na sgìrean far an do rinneadh an rannsachadh seo, mar a tha ri fhaicinn ann am **Figear 1**.

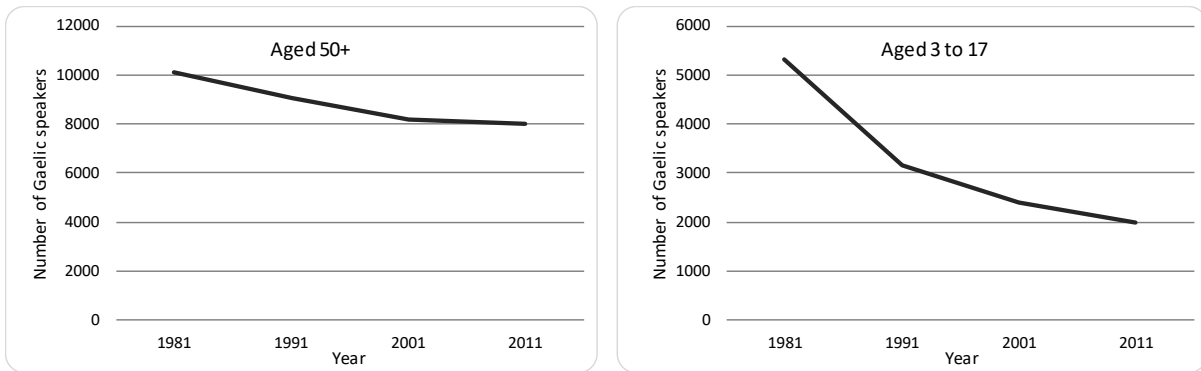


Figure 1: Number of Gaelic speakers per decade illustrating rate of decline in the 50+ and 3 to 17 year-old age-groups
Figear 1: Àireamh luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig gach deichead a' sealltainn cho luath 's a bha an crìonadh anns na buidhnean aoise 50+ agus 3 gu 17

The critical loss of social density in the census data occurred from the 1980s onwards in the overall research area. In the decade from 1981 to 1991, the islands lost its 80%+ social density of Gaelic speakers. Gaelic ability in the 3–17 age cohort contracted particularly severely in that decade. There was a fall of 41% in Gaelic speaker numbers among this young age cohort.

The rate of Gaelic contraction from 1981 onwards indicates the emerging growth of English monolingualism in the islands. The latest Gaelic ability and household data in the 2011 Census demonstrate the current dominance of English monolingualism, as discussed in Chapter 2. This has occurred because of the power dynamics between majority monolingualism and minority bilingualism, typical in language shift. This post-1981 contraction was a pivotal turning-point in the communal decline of Gaelic social networks.

Figure 2 illustrates the projected future levels of Gaelic ability based on previous rates of decline between censuses and the statistical analysis undertaken as part of this research.

'S ann bho na 1980an air adhart a thachair call èiginneach an dlùths shòisealta a-rèir dàta a' chunntais-shluaigh anns an sgìre rannsachaidh uile gu lèir. Anns na deich bliadhna bho 1981 gu 1991, chaill na h-eileanan an dlùths shòisealta 80%+ de luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig. Chrìon comas Gàidhlig gu dona anns a' bhuidhinn aoise 3 gu 17 gu sònraichte anns na bliadhnaichean sin. Bha crìonadh 41% ann an àireimh luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig am measg na buidhne aoise òig seo.

Tha luaths crìonadh na Gàidhlig bho 1981 air adhart a' comharrachadh fàs tràth ann an aon-chànanachas Beurla anns na h-eileanan. Tha an dàta as ùire a thaobh comas Gàidhlig agus dachaighean ann an Cunntas-sluaigh 2011 a' leigeil fhaicinn mar a tha làmh an uachdair aig aon-chànanachas Beurla a-nis, rud a tha air a mhìneachadh ann an Caibideil 2. Thachair seo mar thoradh air an dàimh chumhachd eadar aon-chànanachas anns a' mhòr-chànan agus dà-chànanachas anns a' mhion-chànan, rud a tha àbhaisteach ann an gluasad cànan. 'S e puing-thionndaidh chudromach a bh' anns an lùghdachadh seo às dèidh 1981 ann an crìonadh nan lìonraidhean shòisealta Gàidhlig anns na coimhearsnachdan.

Tha **Figear 2** a' sealltainn ìrean tuairmsichte de chomas Gàidhlig san àm ri teachd a tha stèidhte air luaths a' chrìonaidh eadar cunntasan-sluaigh anns an àm a dh'fhalbh agus air an sgrùdadh staitistigeach a rinneadh mar phàirt den rannsachadh seo.

It shows a progressive and substantial reduction in Gaelic speaking ability in the Western Isles, with the overall projected Gaelic speaker population at the threshold of the moribund category by 2021.

Tha e a' sealltainn lùghdachadh leantainneach agus subsainteach ann an comas bruidhinn na Gàidhlig anns na h-Eileanan Siar, agus an slugh Gàidhlig tuairmsichte uile gu lèir air stairsich neo-bheòthail ro 2021.

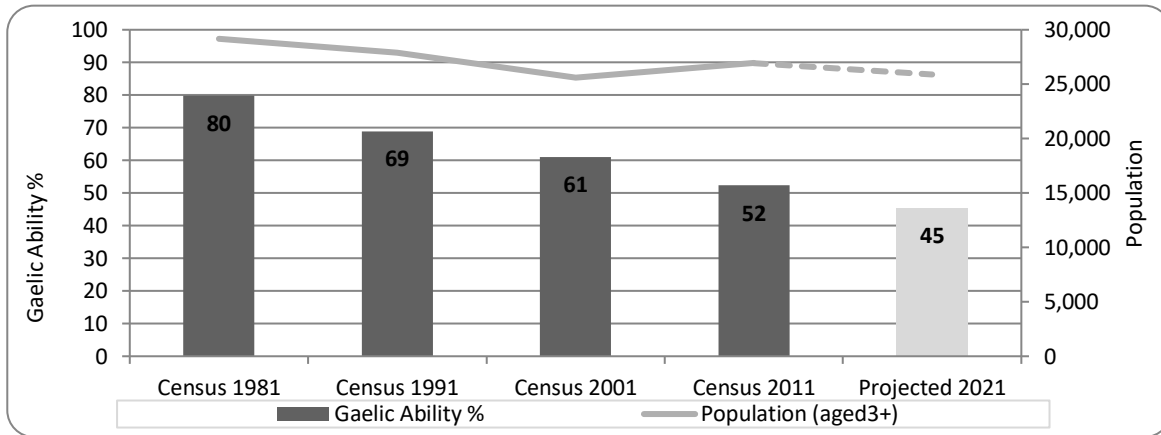


Figure 2: Trend in actual (solid data line) and projected (broken line) population (3+yrs) and actual and projected (2021) percentage Gaelic ability, Western Isles

Figear 2: Treand anns an t-sluagh (3+bliadhna) chlàraichte (loidhne dàta neo-bhrishte) agus tuairmsichte (loidhne brishte) agus meud a-mach às a' cheud de chomas Gàidhlig clàraichte agus tuairmsichte (2021), na h-Eileanan Siar

Map 2.9 from the main report (cf. Table 2.4 in the *Gaelic Crisis*) shows the Gaelic ability data for the 2011 Census according to percentage custom breaks of 15 percentage points pertaining to the five Gaelic ability bands of 90%+, <90%, <75%, <60% and <45% for the youngest cohort, 3–17-year olds in each Study District. This indicates that the youth cohort has fallen below the 45% Gaelic ability level in almost half of the Study Districts, thus resembling the moribund set, as discussed in Chapter 2.

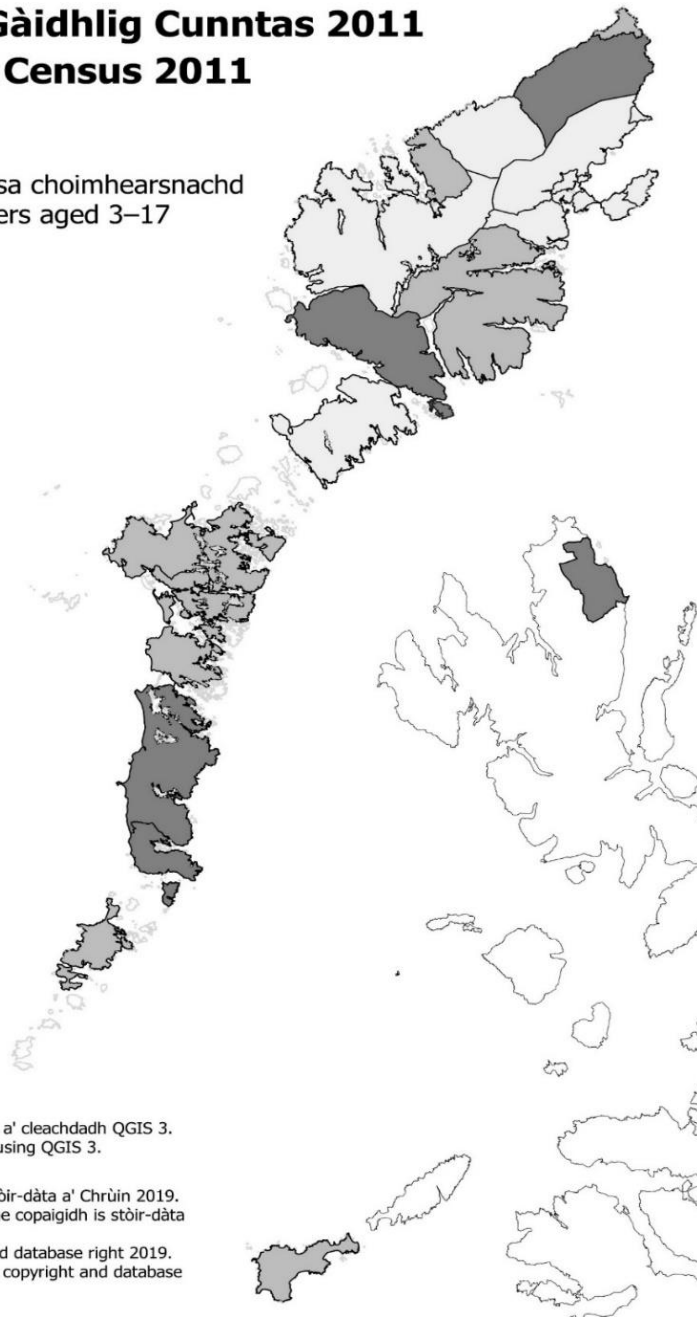
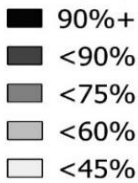
Tha Mapa 2.9 bhon phrìomh aithisg (cf. Clàr 2.4 ann an *Gaelic Crisis*) a' sealltainn an dàta a thaobh comas Gàidhlig airson cunntas-sluaigh 2011 a-rèir bhrisidhean gnàthaichte de 15 puing a-mach às a' cheud a bhuineas do na còig bannan comais Ghàidhlig 90%+, <90%, <75%, <60% and <45% anns a' bhuidhinn aoise as òige, an fheadhainn 3 gu 17 bliadhna dh'aois anns gach sgìre rannsachaidh. Tha seo a' sealltainn gu bheil buidheann na h-òigrìdh air tuiteam fo 45% a thaobh na h-ìre de chomas Gàidhlig ann an cha mhòr an dàrna leth de na sgìrean rannsachaidh, leis gu bheil iad coltach ris an t-seata neo-bheòthail, mar a tha air a mhìneachadh ann an Caibideil 2.

Luchd-labhairt Gàidhlig Cunntas 2011

Gaelic Speakers Census 2011

Cèarnan Sgrùdaidh
Study Districts

Luchd-labhairt aois 3–17 sa choimhearsnachd
Local proportion of speakers aged 3–17



Dèanta le Soillse & Bòrd na Gàidhlig 2019 a' cleachdadh QGIS 3.
Made by Soillse & Bòrd na Gàidhlig 2019 using QGIS 3.

Le dàta bho NRS © Dlighe copaidh is stòir-dàta a' Chrùin 2019.
Le dàta bhon t-Suirbhidh Òrdnais © Dlighe copaidh is stòir-dàta a' Chrùin 2019.
Contains NRS data © Crown copyright and database right 2019.
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2019.

Map 2.9: Percentage custom breaks of Gaelic-competent youth in the Research Area, 2011 Census

Mapa 2.9: Brisidhean gnàthaichte den àireamh a-mach às a' cheud de dh' òigridh le comas Gàidhlig anns an Sgìre Rannsachaidh air fad, Cunntas-sluaigh 2011

6. Preschool children: Gaelic use and competence (Chapter 3)

As part of the research, a survey was undertaken to assess the Gaelic language ability and practice among children attending preschools throughout the research area. A questionnaire was given to preschool managers and teachers. Information on the Gaelic ability of the preschool children at the time of enrolment provides a gauge to assess the levels of Gaelic language practice in families. The preschooler survey indicates that the home transmission of Gaelic to the youngest generation is now exceptional.

6. Clann nan sgoiltean-àraich: cleachdadh agus comas Gàidhlig (Caibideil 3)

Mar phàirt den rannsachadh, chaidh suirbhidh a dhèanamh gus comas agus cleachdadh na Gàidhlig am measg clann a tha a' frithealadh sgoiltean-àraich air feadh na sgìre rannsachaidh a mheasadh. Thugadh ceisteachan do mhanaidsearan is do luchd-teagaisg nan sgoiltean-àraich. Tha fiosrachadh air comas Gàidhlig na cloinne aig an àm a chaidh an clàradh anns an sgoil-àraich a' toirt sealladh dhuinn air an ìre de chleachdadh na Gàidhlig ann an teaghlaidhean. Tha suirbhidh nan sgoiltean-àraich a' leigeil fhaicinn gu bheil toirt seachad na Gàidhlig dhan ghinealach as òige anns an dachaigh a-nis a-mach às an àbhaist.

- Fewer than 4% of responses indicate either fluent native speaker levels of spoken Gaelic or understanding Gaelic on enrolment.
- There is a small but consistent increase in the use of some Gaelic between enrolment time and the time of the survey, showing a small positive effect of the preschools. However, the impact of this is likely to be negligible, in the longer term, without coherent language revitalisation policies in the wider community.
- The findings suggest that official Gaelic-medium education policies are too ambitious in relation to acquisition of Gaelic as a second language from preschool, given the lack of wider communal language revitalisation measures and a lack of resources in the preschool system. Idealistic sectoral expectations place a heavy burden on the preschool practitioners.
- Tha nas lugha na 4% de fhreagairtean a' sealltainn an dara cuid comas fileanta bho thùs ann an Gàidhlig no tuigsinn na Gàidhlig aig àm clàraidh.
- Tha meudachadh beag ach cunbhalach ann a bhith a' cleachdadh beagan Gàidhlig eadar àm clàraidh agus àm an t-suirbhidh, rud a tha a' sealltainn gu bheil buaidh dhearbhadh beag aig na sgoiltean-àraich. A dh'aindeoin sin, tha e coltach nach bi seo a' dèanamh mòran diofair idir, anns an ùine nas fhaide, gun phoileasaidhean ath-bheòthachaidh chànan ciallach agus cunbhalach anns a' choimhearsnachd as fharsainghe.
- Tha na toraidhean bho shuirbhidh nan sgoiltean-àraich a' sealltainn gu bheil poileasaidhean oifigeil a thaobh foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig tuilleadh is dòchasach a thaobh Gàidhlig a thogail mar dhàrna cànan bhon sgoil-àraich, leis nach eil gu leòr de cheumannan ath-bheòthachaidh chànan sa choimhearsnachd gu lèir, agus air sàillibh dìth ghoireasan ann an siostam nan sgoiltean-àraich. Tha dòchasan ro àrd an t-siostaim a' cur uallach trom air luchd-obrach nan sgoiltean-àraich.

Data shown at **Table 1** is based on two specific questions related to children's Gaelic ability:

Tha dàta ann an **Clàr 1** stèidhte air dà cheist shònraichte co-cheangailte ri comas Gàidhlig na cloinne:

Ability in Gaelic at time of enrolment	Able to speak Gaelic		Able to understand Gaelic	
	N	%	N	%
Fluent native speaker ability	10	2.8	13	3.6
Good Gaelic	5	1.4	11	3.1
Reasonable Gaelic	14	3.9	26	7.2
A few words of Gaelic	72	20.1	82	22.8
No Gaelic	258	71.9	227	63.2
Total	359	100.0	359	100.0

Table 1: Ability in speaking and understanding Gaelic at enrolment

Clàr 1: Comas bruidhinn agus tuigsinn na Gàidhlig aig àm clàraidh

Table 1 shows that the highest proportion of children had no ability in speaking or understanding Gaelic upon enrolment in preschool (71.9% and 63.2% respectively); followed by those who could speak and understand a few words of Gaelic on enrolment (20.1% and 22.8% respectively). Fewer than 3% were reported to be fluent native speakers.

Tha **Clàr 1** a' sealltainn gun robh a' cho-roinn as àirde den chloinn gun chomas idir ann am bruidhinn no tuigsinn na Gàidhlig nuair a chaidh an clàradh anns an sgoil-àraich (71.9% and 63.2% mu seach). Chaidh aithris gun robh Gàidhlig fhileanta bho thùs aig na bu lugha na 3% den chloinn.

Table 2 shows the numbers and percentages of responses regarding the language a child speaks to preschool teachers. It can be noted that there is a substantial increase in the number of responses in the *Mixed* and *Mainly* English categories to these questions in relation to 'now' (at the time of the survey) in comparison to the lower level of responses in relation to 'on enrolment'.

Tha **Clàr 2** a' sealltainn àireamhan uile gu lèir agus àireamhan a-mach às a' cheud de fhreagairtean a thaobh dè an cànan a bhruidhneas am pàiste ri luchd-teagaisg anns an sgoil-àraich. Chithear gu bheil meudachadh susbainteach anns an àireamh de fhreagairtean anns na catagairidhean Beurla *Measgaichte* agus *Airson a' chuid as motha* air na ceistean seo a thaobh 'a-nis' (aig àm an t-suirbhidh) an coimeas ris an ìre nas ìsle de fhreagairtean a thaobh 'àm clàraidh'.

Language spoken to preschool teachers	On enrolment		Now (at time of survey)	
	N	%	N	%
Gaelic only	7	1.9	5	1.7
Mainly Gaelic	3	0.8	13	4.5
Mix of Gaelic and English	18	4.9	45	15.5
Mainly English	36	9.8	76	26.1
English only	300	81.3	151	51.9
Another language	5	1.4	1	0.3
Total	369	100.0	291	100.0

Table 2: Language spoken by children preschool to teachers, on enrolment and at time of survey

Clàr 2: An cànan a bhruidhneas clann anns na sgoiltean-àraich ri tidsearan, aig àm clàraidh agus aig àm an t-suirbhidh

Table 2 shows that 21.7% of children speak in Gaelic within the level of the top three Gaelic options at the time of the survey. The percentage data indicate that the children mainly speak English to preschool teachers. The responses for language practice data taken together point to a situation where English is the main language spoken by children on enrolment, and that English continues to be used by the majority of them during their time at preschool.

We can conclude that English is overwhelmingly the home language for the majority of the children, and that the use of English among infants predominates in the formal and informal activities of the preschools in the islands. Data and responses generated by this research lead to the conclusion that the home acquisition of Gaelic is now exceptional. Gaelic-medium education is now nearly the only context to assist the young in acquiring Gaelic, given that a large majority of children enrolling in preschools have no Gaelic ability.

7. Teenagers: Gaelic use, competence and attitudes (Chapter 4)

The teenage survey described in Chapter 4 of the book involved a questionnaire completed by 16 to 18-year-olds in the four secondary schools in the Western Isles. The results indicate the same general sociolinguistic issues raised by the preschool survey, i.e. the marginal societal practice of Gaelic in the islands among the young:

- The use of Gaelic is much lower than levels of ability.
- Even for those indicating Gaelic ability at good to fluent level, the actual practice of Gaelic among this cohort is now marginal.

Tha **Clàr 2** a' sealltainn gum bi 21.7% de chloinn a' bruidhinn ann an Gàidhlig taobh a-staigh ìre nan trì roghainnean Gàidhlig as àirde aig àm an t-suirbhidh. Tha an dàta a-mach às a' cheud a' leigeil fhaicinn gur e Beurla as motha a bhios a' chlann a' bruidhinn ri tidsearan nan sgoiltean-àraich. Tha na freagairtean a thaobh cleachdadh cànan uile gu lèir a' comharrachadh suidheachadh anns a bheil Beurla mar phrìomh chànan a bhruidhneas clann aig àm clàraidh, agus gun lean a' chuid as motha dhiubh orra a' cleachdadh na Beurla fhad 's a tha iad anns an sgoil-àraich.

Faodar co-dhùnadh a dhèanamh gur e Beurla cànan na dachaigh airson a' mhòr-mhòr-chuid den chloinn, agus gu bheil làmh an uachdair aig cleachdadh na Beurla am measg phàistean òga ann an gnìomhachdan foirmeil agus neo-foirmeil nan sgoiltean-àraich anns na h-eileanan. Tha dàta agus freagairtean a tha a' tighinn a-mach às an rannsachadh seo gar toirt chun a' cho-dhùnaidh gu bheil togail na Gàidhlig san dachaigh a-nis gu mòr a-mach às an àbhaist. Cha mhòr nach e foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig a-nis an aon cho-theacsa airson clann a chuideachadh ann a bhith a' togail na Gàidhlig, a chionn 's gu bheil a' mhòr-mhòr-chuid de chloinn a tha gan clàradh ann an sgoiltean-àraich gun chomas aca sa Ghàidhlig.

7. Deugairean: cleachdadh, comas agus beachdan a thaobh na Gàidhlig (Caibideil 4)

'S e a bha an lùib suirbhidh nan deugairean (cunntas ann an Caibideil 4 san leabhar) ach ceisteachan a chaidh a lìonadh a-steach le feadhainn 16 gu 18 bliadhna a dh'aois anns na ceithir àrd-sgoiltean anns na h-Eileanan Siar. Tha na h-aon trioblaidean a' nochdadh anns na toraidhean 's a thàinig am follais ann an suirbhidh nan sgoiltean-àraich, 's e sin, cho iomallach 's a tha cleachdadh sòisealta na Gàidhlig anns na h-eileanan am measg na h-òigridh:

- Tha an ìre de chleachdadh na Gàidhlig tòrr nas ìsle na an ìre de chomas.
- Fiù 's dhaibhsan a tha ag ràdh gu bheil comas Gàidhlig aca aig ìre math gu fileanta, tha cleachdadh na Gàidhlig am measg na buidhne seo a-nis fìor lag.

- The pooled data analysis shows low levels of Gaelic use in the home; 18% of teenagers report both parents as fluent in Gaelic, and 5.1% report that they *Always* or *Mainly* speak Gaelic to their parents. No Pooled Study District had more than 45% of both parents fluent in Gaelic (see **Table 3**)
- Whilst around 20% of teenagers report fluency in Gaelic (either as native speakers, 14.3%, or learners, 6%), 1.3% of teenagers report that they *Always* or *Mainly* speak Gaelic to their friends.
- Overall, in all areas outside Stornoway, slightly fewer than 7% of teenagers reported speaking Gaelic to their parents *Always* or *Mainly*.
- There is a stark contrast between the teenagers' unrealistic positive aspirations for the future of Gaelic in the islands (as shown by attitudinal questions) and their actual Gaelic practice.
- Regarding identity, only 32.6% of the teenagers self-ascribe as Gaels, compared with 79% of respondents in the community survey (Chapter 5), which reflects identity ascription among older generations in the strongest remaining Gaelic-speaking areas.
- Tha mion-sgrùdadh air an dàta co-aonaichte a' sealltainn ìrean ìseal de chleachdadh na Gàidhlig san dachaigh; tha 18% den deugairean ag aithris gu bheil an dà phàrant fileanta sa Ghàidhlig, agus 5.1% ag aithris gu bheil iad a' bruidhinn Gàidhlig rim pàrantan *An còmhnaidh* no *Airson a' chuid as motha* den ùine (faic **Clàr 3**).
- Ged a tha timcheall air 20% de na deugairean ag aithris fileantachd sa Ghàidhlig (eadar fileantaich, 14.3%, no luchd-ionnsachaidh, 6%), tha 1.3% de dheugairean ag aithris gu bheil iad a' bruidhinn Gàidhlig rin caraidean *An còmhnaidh* no *Airson a' chuid as motha* den ùine.
- Uile gu lèir, anns gach sgìre taobh a-muigh Steòrnabhaigh, thuir rud beag nas lugha na 7% de na deugairean gum bi iad a' bruidhinn Gàidhlig rim pàrantan *An còmhnaidh* no *Airson a' chuid as motha*.
- Tha beàrn mhòr ann eadar àrd-mhiannan dearbhach neo-phractaigeach nan deugairean a thaobh Gàidhlig san àm ri teachd anns na h-eileanan (a-rèir mar a nochd anns na ceistean beachd) agus an ìre de chleachdadh na Gàidhlig ann an da-rìribh.
- A thaobh fèin-aithne, cha robh ach 32.6% de na deugairean a' coimhead orra fhèin mar Ghàidheil, an taca ri 79% de luchd-freagairt anns an t-suirbhidh choimhearsnachd (Caibideil 5), rud a tha a' buntainn ri mar a bhios na ginealaichean as sine anns na sgìrean Gàidhlig as làidire a tha air am fàgail a' coimhead orra fhèin.

Table 3 provides an overview of the key summary data from the survey of the teenagers by Pooled Study Districts, as well as All Rural Areas (i.e. Study Districts outwith Stornoway; All Rural Areas = all Pooled Study Districts except the Pooled Study District of Stornoway & Suburbs).

Tha **Clàr 3** a' toirt seachad geàrr-chunntas den phrìomh dhàta bho shuirbhidh nan deugairean a-rèir Sgìrean Rannsachaidh Co-aonaichte, cho math ris na Sgìrean Dùthchail Air Fad ('s e sin Sgìrean Rannsachaidh taobh a-muigh Steòrnabhaigh; Sgìrean Dùthchail Air Fad = a h-uile Sgìre Rannsachaidh Cho-aonaichte ach a-mhàin Sgìre Rannsachaidh Cho-aonaichte Steòrnabhaigh agus Iomall a' Bhaile).

Pooled Study District	Mother from the islands (%)	Father from the islands (%)	Mother and father fluent in Gaelic (%)	Pupils reported fluent in Gaelic (%)	Always or mainly speak Gaelic to their parents (%)	Always or mainly speak Gaelic to their friends (%)	Always or mainly speak Gaelic to their neighbours (%)
Lewis N&W (N = 49)	58.4	58.4	40.8	32.7	12.6	4.3	12.5
Lewis E (N = 80)	61.5	65.8	17.5	18.8	5.1	1.3	13.1
Harris (N = 37)	54.0	55.5	42.9	21.6	8.4	0.0	5.6
North Uist, Benbecula (N = 19)	55.5	83.4	27.8	26.4	5.3	0.0	5.3
South Uist, Barra & Vatersay (N = 30)	60.7	72.4	30.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	10.7
Stornoway & Suburbs (N = 78)	72.0	53.4	5.5	14.1	1.3	1.3	2.6
Research Area (Western Isles)	61.2	60.6	18.4	20.3	5.1	1.3	8.2
All Rural Areas (N = 215)	58.8	64.8	29.7	23.4	6.6	1.4	10.6

Table 3: Percentages of parental origin, parental ability and pupils' Gaelic ability and practice, by Pooled Study Districts and All Rural Areas
Clàr 3: Àireamhan a-mach às a' cheud de dh'àite-bunaidh phàrantan, comas agus cleachdadh Gàidhlig aig pàrantan agus aig sgoilearan, a-rèir Sgìrean Rannsachaidh Co-aonaichte agus Sgìrean Dùthchail Air Fad

The data in **Table 3** clearly illustrate the limited levels of Gaelic use in communication between teenagers and their parents. The primary point to emerge from the survey of the teenage cohort is that the Gaelic language exists at the margins of the daily lives and concerns of the majority of teenagers across the Western Isles. The evidence of both the communal decline of Gaelic and the low levels of Gaelic competence among the teenage cohort indicates that without a community-wide revival of Gaelic, the loss of vernacular Gaelic will continue. Without a societal revival, the education system alone cannot effectively implement revitalisation efforts among the Gaelic vernacular community. A shift to sole dependence on the school system for creating the next generation of fluent Gaelic speakers, capable of contributing to the communal practice of the language, is not credible, both as a public policy assumption and as a basis for effective and equitable allocation of resources.

8. The Small Islands Community Sociolinguistic Survey and Speaker Typology Survey (Chapters 5 and 6)

Chapters 5 and 6 of the book focus on two detailed surveys of three small island communities. Scalpay, Grimsay and Eriskay were selected since they had comparatively higher levels of Gaelic competence, as indicated by 2011 Census figures. These three islands provided the opportunity to investigate the sociolinguistic profiles of some of the strongest remaining Gaelic communities in the Western Isles.

The Community Sociolinguistic Survey (Chapter 5) took a census-type approach based on a structured questionnaire, administered by project fieldworkers on household visits. The questionnaire was answered by 180 respondents, representing 180 out of 291 households in total in the three islands according to the 2011 Census.

The separate Speaker Typology Survey (Chapter 6) represents an assessment by a local advisor in each island of the Gaelic-speaking ability and practice of the whole populations of the three islands. The advisors, being knowledgeable of their own communities, were generally very confident in their assessments of all individuals and households in their communities.

Tha an dàta ann an **Clàr 3** a' sealltainn gu soilleir nan ìrean ìseal de chleachdadh na Gàidhlig ann an conaltradh eadar deugairean agus am pàrantan. 'S e a' phuing as cudromaiche bho shuirbhidh nan deugairean gu bheil a' Ghàidhlig air an iomall ann am beatha làitheil a' mhòr-chuid de dheugairean air feadh nan Eilean Siar agus nach bi iad a' gabhail cus dragh mu deidhinn. Tha an fhianais a thaobh an dà chuid crìonadh na Gàidhlig anns a' choimhearsnachd agus na h-ìrean ìseal de chomas Gàidhlig am measg nan deugairean a' sealltainn gun lean call na Gàidhlig dhùthchasaich air, gun ath-bheòthachadh a' chànain tron choimhearsnachd air fad. Às aonais ath-bheòthachadh aig ìre a' chomainn-shòisealta, chan eil an siostam foghlaim leis fhèin gu leòr airson oidhirpean ath-bheòthachaidh a chur an gnìomh gu h-èifeachdach am measg sluaigh dùthchasach na Gàidhlig. Tha gluasad gu bhith uile gu lèir an eisimeil ri siostam an fhoghlaim gus an ath ghinealach de luchd-labhairt fileanta a thoirt gu ìre, a bhiodh comasach cur ri cleachdadh a' chànain sa choimhearsnachd, do-chreidsinneach, an dà chuid mar bhonn-stèidh poileasaidh poblach agus mar bhunait do roinneadh èifeachdach agus cothromach de ghoireasan.

8. Suirbhidh Sòiseo-chànanach Coimhearsnachd nan Tri Eileanan agus Suirbhidh Gnè-eòlas an Luchd-labhairt (Caibideilean 5 agus 6)

Tha Caibideilean 5 agus 6 anns an leabhar a' cuimseachadh air dà sgrùdadh mionaideach air trì coimhearsnachdan eileanach. Chaidh Sgalpaigh na Hearadh, Griomasaigh agus Èirisgeidh a thaghadh a chionn 's gun robh ìrean meadhanach àrd de chomas Gàidhlig annta, a-rèir figearan a' Chunntais-shluaigh ann an 2011. Le bhith a' coimhead gu dlùth air na trì eileanan seo, bha cothrom ann proifilean sòiseo-chànanach de chuid de na coimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig as làidire a tha air am fàgail anns na h-Eileanan Siar a rannsachadh.

Bha modh-rannsachaidh an t-Suirbhidh Shòiseo-chànanaich Choimhearsnachd (Caibideil 5) coltach ri cunntas-sluaigh is e stèidhte air ceisteachan structaraichte, a chaidh a dhèanamh le luchd-obrach a' phròiseict is iad a' tadhal air dachaighean. Fhreagair 180 duine an ceisteachan, is iad a' riochdachadh 180 a-mach à 291 de dhachaighean uile gu lèir anns na trì eileanan a-rèir Cunntas-sluaigh 2011.

Tha Suirbhidh Gnè-eòlais an Luchd-labhairt (Caibideil 6) air a bhonntachadh air measadh a chaidh a dhèanamh le neach-comhairleachaidh ionadail anns gach eilean air comas agus cleachdadh Gàidhlig an t-sluaigh air fad anns na trì eileanan. Bha an luchd-comhairleachaidh gu math eòlach air an coimhearsnachdan fhèin, agus airson a' chuid bu mhotha bha iad gu math cinnteach mu na measaidhean aca air gach neach fa leth agus gach dachaigh anns a' choimhearsnachd aca fhèin.

The resulting data were aggregated and anonymised. Assessments of speaker categories were based on criteria discussed in detail with the local advisors in advance.

The small island surveys indicate the following:

- Corroborating the census-based demolinguistic analysis in Chapter 2, the local surveys indicate the loss of Gaelic dominance especially since the 1980s, but with significant evidence of initial contraction in the 1970s also.
- In the Community Sociolinguistic Survey of those aged 65+, 72% of respondents in the three islands report themselves as fluent Gaelic speakers; 31.6% of respondents report that their spouses/partners speak only or mainly Gaelic to them; however, 15.5% of all respondents' children were raised in households only or mainly through Gaelic.
- There is a steep decline in the intergenerational transmission and familial use of Gaelic among the younger age cohorts resident on these three islands.
- The findings mirror the surveys of the preschools (Chapter 3) and of the teenagers (Chapter 4). The majority (63.6%) of respondents aged under 45 were reported as not being fluent in Gaelic.

As the Gaelic-language profiles of the resident populations of Scalpay, Grimsay and Eriskay are considered to be among the strongest vernacular communities still in existence, we can conclude from these island surveys that:

- Even the strongest Gaelic-speaking communities are in an advanced stage of language shift
- The familial and communal transmission of Gaelic is now marginal
- Only the older age groups have any appreciable experience of socialisation in Gaelic-language communal practice
- Gaelic is, therefore, marginal to the lives of the young in the three islands

Chaidh an dàta a thàinig à seo a chur còmhla agus a dhèanamh gun urra. Bha measaidhean a thaobh chatagairidhean de luchd-labhairt stèidhte air slatan-tomhais mionaideach a chaidh aontachadh leis an luchd-chomhairleachaidh ionadail ro-làimh.

Tha suirbhidhean nan trì eileanan a' sealltainn na leanas:

- Ag aontachadh ris an sgrùdadh dheama-chànanach stèidhte air cunntasan-sluaigh ann an Caibideil 2, tha na suirbhidhean ionadail a' sealltainn gu bheil a' Ghàidhlig air a bhith a' call làmh an uachdair gu h-àraid bho na 1980an, ach gu bheil fianais shusbainteach ann gun do thòisich astar a' tighinn air crìonadh-cànain anns na 1970an.
- Anns an t-Suirbhidh Shòiseo-chànanach Choimhearsnachd, a-mach à feadhainn os cionn 65 bliadhna a dh'aois, thuir 72% de luchd-fhreagairt anns na trì eileanan gun robh Gàidhlig fhileanta aca; thuir 31.6% den luchd-fhreagairt nach eil an cèile a' bruidhinn ach Gàidhlig riutha, no gur e Gàidhlig as motha a bhios iad a' bruidhinn; ge-tà thogadh 15.5% de chlann an luchd-fhreagairt air fad ann an dachaighean tro Ghàidhlig a-mhàin airson a' chuid as motha.
- Tha crìonadh luath ann an toirt seachad na Gàidhlig dhan ath ghinealach agus ann an cleachdadh a' chànan ann an dachaigh am measg nam buidhnean aoise as òige a tha a' fuireach anns na trì eileanan seo.
- Tha na toraidhean coltach ri suirbhidhean nan sgoiltean-àraich (Caibideil 3) agus nan deugairean (Caibideil 4). Chaidh innse nach robh a' mhòr-chuid (63.6%) den luchd-fhreagairt fo 45 bliadhna dh'aois fileanta ann an Gàidhlig.

Leis gu bheil proifilean cànan Gàidhlig nan sluaghan-còmhnaidh ann an Sgalpaigh, Griomasaigh agus Èirisgeidh am measg nan coimhearsnachdan dùthchasach as làidire a tha fhathast ann, faodaidh sinn na co-dhùnidhean a leanas a ruigsinn bho shuirbhidhean nan eileanan seo:

- Tha fiù 's na coimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig as làidire fada air adhart ann an gluasad cànan
- Tha togail is cleachdadh na Gàidhlig anns an dachaigh is anns a' choimhearsnachd a-nis gu math lag
- 'S e na buidhnean aoise as sine a-mhàin aig a bheil eòlas susbainteach sam bith air sòisealachadh agus air cleachdadh na Gàidhlig ann an suidheachadh coimhearsnachd
- Tha a' Ghàidhlig, mar sin, neo-chudromach ann am beatha na h-òigridh anns na trì eileanan

- It is clear that the process of language shift began in the 1970s
- It is evident that the vernacular use of Gaelic is now extremely fragile and on the verge of total language loss.

- Tha e soilleir gun do thòisich pròiseas a' ghluasaid chànanain anns na 1970an
- Tha e follaiseach gu bheil cleachdadh dùthchasach na Gàidhlig a-nis gu math cugallach agus tha call iomlan a' chànanain air fàire.

Figure 3 illustrates Gaelic ability by age group among reported residents in all three islands, according to the Speaker Typology Survey.

Tha **Figear 3** a' sealltainn comas Gàidhlig a-rèir buidheann aoise am measg luchd-còmhnaidh clàraichte anns na trì eileanan, a-rèir Suirbhidh Gnè-eòlas an Luchd-labhairt.

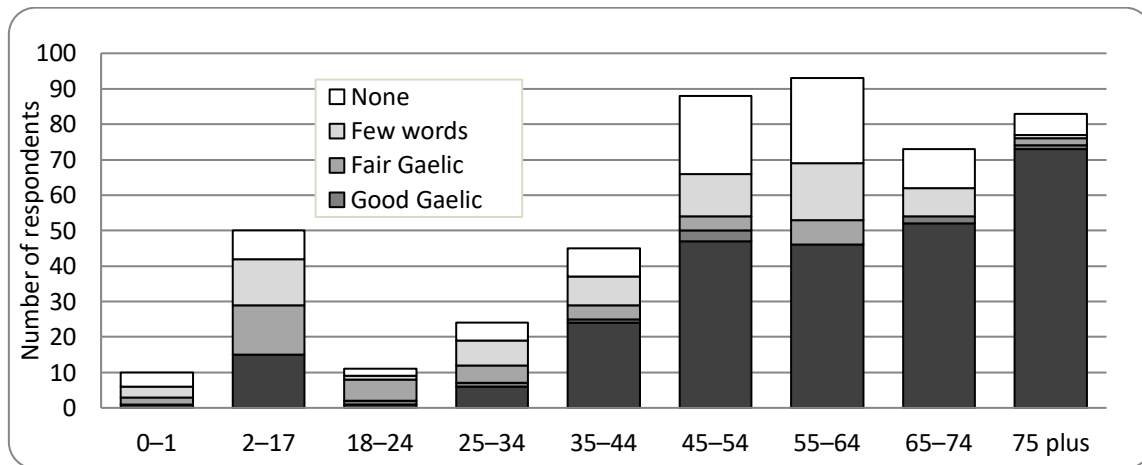


Figure 3: Gaelic ability by age group (N = 477)

Figear 3: Comas Gàidhlig a-rèir buidheann aoise (N = 477)

9. Tracking a Trajectory of Decline (Chapter 7)

Chapter 7 brings together the data from the different modules to provide an overall picture of the demolinguistic decline of Gaelic in the research area. The main findings of the correlation analysis in Chapter 7 indicate the positive relationship between higher social densities of Gaelic ability in the population and more favourable Gaelic results for household use, Gaelic identity ascription, levels of parental fluency and various communal vibrancy rates. The Gaelic demolinguistic data from the Scottish Census clearly demonstrate a 30-year trajectory of decline of Gaelic in the islands since 1981:

- For every ten-year period since 1981, there has been a 13% proportional average loss in Gaelic speakers.
- In absolute numbers, this represents an average loss of 3,220 Gaelic speakers each decade from 1981 to 2011.
- The proportional contraction over the 30-year period is 35%, a net loss of 9,660 speakers.
- The contraction of the Gaelic-speaking group during the 10-year period of 1981–1991 was particularly critical to the social viability of Gaelic.

9. A' lorg cùrsa a' chrìonaidh (Caibideil 7)

Tha Caibideil 7 a' toirt an fhiosrachaidh bho na diofar mhodalan rannsachaidh còmhla gus dealbh iomlan a thoirt seachad air crìonadh deama-chànanach na Gàidhlig anns an sgìre rannsachaidh. Tha prìomh thoraidhean an sgrùdaidh cho-dhàimh ann an Caibideil 7 a' toirt am follais a' cheangail dhearbhaich eadar dlùthsan sòisealta nas àirde de chomas Gàidhlig anns an t-sluaigh agus toraidhean nas fhàbharaiche a thaobh cleachdadh na Gàidhlig san dachaigh, fèin-aithne Ghàidhealach, ìrean de dh'fhileantas am measg phàrantan agus caochladh thomhasan de bheòthalachd chànanain anns a' choimhearsnachd. Tha an dàta deama-chànanach Gàidhlig bho Chunntas-sluaigh na h-Alba a' taisbeanadh cùrsa crìonaidh gu math soilleir anns na h-eileanan thairis air 30 bliadhna bho 1981:

- Gach deich bliadhna bho 1981, bha call co-roinneil 13% anns a' chumantas ann an luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig.
- Ann an dearbh-àireamhan, is ionann seo is call anns a' chumantas de 3,220 de luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig gach deich bliadhna bho 1981 gu 2011.
- 'S e an crìonadh co-roinneil thairis air na 30 bliadhna 35%, 's e sin call glan de 9,660 de luchd-labhairt.
- Bha crìonadh an t-sluaigh Ghàidhlig fad nan deich bliadhna bho 1981 gu 1991 gu h-àraid cronail do bheòthalachd shòisealta na Gàidhlig.

- During the 1980s Gaelic speakers in the Western Isles fell below the high social density of 80%. Between 1981 and 1991, the number of Gaelic speakers dropped by 4,242, representing an 18% absolute fall, from a base of 24,226 Gaelic speakers in 1981.
- However, the contraction for the 3–17 age cohort, many of whom were born in the 1970s, underwent an even more rapid decline during the 1980s, from 5,329 to 3,166 speakers, representing a decadal absolute fall in speakers of 41%.
- The youth cohort reporting an ability in Gaelic in the 2011 Census stands at less than 2,000 speakers.
- While data from the 2011 Census indicate that 52% of the 3-yrs+ population report an ability in Gaelic, a comparison of the individual Gaelic ability data with the household use of Gaelic (19% of the total family households) suggests that the current size of the Gaelic vernacular speaker group extends to around 11,000 people.
- Most of these vernacular speakers are over the age of 50, dispersed throughout the islands.
- Anns na 1980an thuit luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig anns na h-Eileanan Siar fon dlùths shòisealta àrd de 80%. Eadar 1981 agus 1999, bha lùghdachadh de 4,242 anns an àireamh de luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig, 's e sin crìonadh de 18%, bho 24,226 de luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig ann an 1981.
- Ge-tà chrìon a' bhuidheann aoise 3–17, tòrr dhiubh a rugadh anns na 1970an, na bu luaithe buileach anns na 1980an, bho 5,329 gu 3,166 de luchd-labhairt, 's e sin tuiteam uile gu lèir de 41% anns an àireamh de luchd-labhairt thairis air na deich bliadhna.
- Tha buidheann aoise na h-òigridh aig a bheil comas Gàidhlig ann an Cunntas-sluaigh 2011 a' gabhail a-steach nas lugha na 2,000 de luchd-labhairt.
- Ged a tha dàta bho Chunntas-sluaigh 2011 a' sealltainn gu bheil 52% den t-sluaigh os cionn 3 bliadhna a dh'aois ag innse gu bheil comas Gàidhlig aca, tha coimeas eadar an dàta air comas Gàidhlig dhaoine fa leth agus cleachdadh na Gàidhlig anns an dachaigh (19% de na dachaighean teaghlaich air fad) a' sealltainn gu bheil timcheall air 11,000 duine ann an sluaigh dùthchasach na Gàidhlig an-dràsta.
- Tha a' mhòr-chuid den luchd-labhairt dùthchasach seo os cionn 50 bliadhna a dh'aois, is iad sgapte air feadh nan eilean.

The evidence from this research study has shown the progressive trajectory from Gaelic-English bilingualism to English monolingualism. The Gaelic-speaking communities in the islands lost the capacity to renew themselves as a sustainable group in the 1980s, with less severe contraction in the 1970s. Under prevailing social conditions, the Gaelic speaker group does not have the demographic or societal resources to sustain a communal presence in the islands beyond the next 10 years, except for isolated atypical networks of elderly speakers.

A recognition of this reality by the speaker group and the relevant authorities will be crucial in any balanced discussions of a revival and an alternative policy process. An acceptance of this reality will be a first step by the community and authorities to indicate that the Gaelic vernacular crisis will be taken seriously.

Tha an fhianais bhon phròiseact rannsachaidh seo air gluasad leantainneach a shealltainn air falbh bho dhà-chànanachas Gàidhlig-Beurla a dh'ionnsaigh aon-chànanachas Beurla. Chaill coimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig nan eilean an comas gus iad fhèin ath-ghintinn mar shluaigh seasmhach anns na 1980an, le crìonadh nach robh cho luath anns na 1970an. Anns an t-suidheachadh shòisealta a tha ann, chan eil de ghoireasan deamagrafach no sòisealta aig sluaigh na Gàidhlig a chumas suas làthaireachd mar choimhearsnachd anns na h-eileanan seachad air na 10 bliadhna ri tighinn, taobh a-muigh corra-lìonra iomallach, mì-àbhaisteach de luchd-labhairt aosta.

Ann an deasbad cothromach sam bith a thaobh ath-bheòthachadh agus pròiseas poileasaidh eadar-dhealaichte, bidh e air leth cudromach gun aithnich an dà chuid a' choimhearsnachd agus na buidhnean oifigeil poblach firinn an t-suidheachaidh seo airson dèanamh cinnteach gun gabhar ri staing nan Gàidheal dùthchasach an dà-rìribh.

10. Re-aligning Gaelic policy in line with the social reality of the speaker group (Chapter 8)

Chapter 8 of the *Gaelic Crisis* provides an analysis of the limitations of current Gaelic policy, and the thinking informing it, in view of the depiction of the social reality of vernacular Gaelic which has emerged from the Islands Gaelic Research Project.

10.1. Mismatch between vision, provision and strategy

Analysis of existing language-policy frameworks demonstrates a disparity between the high level of aspiration for Gaelic language policy in institutional and academic discourses on the one hand, and the severity of the disruption to social use of Gaelic on the other. This combines with the highly limited support for the indigenous Gaelic-speaking population, and the fact that the Gaelic speaker group lacks independent agency. Although a milestone in official recognition of the language, there are clear and fundamental limitations in the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and the policy framework deriving from it, including:

- The weak relevance of current strategic initiatives for the vernacular Gaelic speakers
- The weak effectiveness and lack of equity in resource allocation
- The limited capacity of public bodies to deliver policy outcomes
- The negative social impact on the Gaelic speaker group of the weak relevance of the policy.

10.2. Bias towards the Gaelic learner rather than the actual speaker group

Current policy provision displays a general bias in favour of Gaelic learners and potential future secondary bilingual speakers at the expense of existing vernacular speakers and their communities. This bias, evident in certain institutional and academic discourses, disregards a troubling societal Gaelic present while promoting an imagined Gaelic future, regardless of the likelihood or otherwise of widespread take-up and social practice of the language.

10. Ath-leasachadh poileasaidh na Gàidhlig a-rèir fìor shuidheachadh sòisealta an luchd-labhairt (Caibideil 8)

Tha Caibideil 8 den leabhar *Gaelic Crisis* a' toirt seachad measadh air na laigsean ann am poileasaidh Gàidhlig an latha an-diugh, agus anns na beachd-smuaintean a tha air a chùil, ann an co-theacsa an deilbh de dh'fhìor shuidheachadh sòisealta na Gàidhlig dhùthchasaich, agus a tha air a mhìneachadh tron rannsachadh seo.

10.1. Mì-chòrdadh eadar lèirsinn, solarachadh agus ro-innleachd

Tha sgrùdadh air frèaman-obrach a' phoileasaidh chànain a tha ann an-dràsta a' leigeil fhaicinn gu bheil mì-chòrdadh eadar an ìre àrd de dhòchas a thaobh poileasaidh cànain Gàidhlig ann an deasbadaidh institiùideach agus acadaimigeach air an dara làimh, agus cho dona 's a tha am briseadh sìos ann an cleachdadh sòisealta na Gàidhlig air an làimh eile. A bharrachd air seo, chan eil ach taic gu math lag ann dhan t-sluagh dhùthchasach Ghàidhlig, agus chan eil mòran comas-gnìomha neo-eisimileach aig na Gàidheil. Ged as e clach-mhìle a tha ann a thaobh aithneachadh oifigeil a' chànain, tha laigsean soilleir agus bunaiteach ann an Achd na Gàidhlig (Alba) 2005 agus anns an fhrèam-obrach phoileasaidh a thàinig às, a' gabhail a-steach:

- Buntainneas lag nan iomairtean ro-innleachdail an-dràsta do luchd-labhairt dùthchasach na Gàidhlig
- Dìth èifeachd agus dìth chothromachd ann am buileachadh ghoireasan
- Comas lag bhuidhnean poblach gus toraidhean poileasaidh a lìbhrigeadh
- Droch bhuidhnean shòisealta aig buntainneas lag a' phoileasaidh air slugh na Gàidhlig.

10.2. Claon-bhàidh ri luchd-ionnsachaidh na Gàidhlig seach an slugh cànain làthaireil

Tha claon-bhàidh ri luchd-ionnsachaidh na Gàidhlig agus ri luchd-labhairt roghainneil dà-chànanach a dh'fhaodadh a bhith ann san àm ri teachd ri faicinn ann an solarachadh poileasaidh làthaireil, a' dèanamh cron air luchd-labhairt dùthchasach a tha ann an-dràsta agus an coimhearsnachdan. Tha a' chlaon-bhàidh seo, a tha follaiseach ann an cuid de dheasbadaidh institiùideach agus acadaimigeach, a' cur suidheachadh sòisealta trioblaideach nan Gàidheil a tha ann an-dràsta an dàrna taobh, fhad 's a tha i a' cur air adhart gun tig piseach mac-meanmnaid air a' Ghàidhlig anns an àm ri teachd, ge be dè cho coltach no cho eu-coltach 's a tha e gun gabhar an cànan os làimh gu farsaing is gun tèid a chleachdadh gu sòisealta gu ìre shusbainteach.

Language policy, as it has emerged in Scotland, has seen Gaelic prioritised as a secondary and/or optional socio-cultural practice to the detriment of those for whom it is a primary identity and lived reality. This learner-focused policy has emerged as an alternative approach or even a sanctioned compensation for the failure of 'Gaelic policy' to address the erosion of the Gaelic community.

To make Gaelic language policy credible, feasible and coherent, this bias in policy and provision must be addressed.

In the broader context of Gaelic public policy in Scotland, it is important to recognise the different requirements of the two main Gaelic constituencies, i.e. the indigenous Gaelic community on the one hand, and other networks outside the Western Isles on the other, including second-language speakers. The weak demolingistic position which characterises the social reality of Gaelic everywhere in Scotland suggests that both constituencies require each other to survive and prosper.

Without a viable indigenous Gaelic community, which is the well-spring of Gaelic cultural and linguistic heritage, learners may not only struggle to acquire Gaelic, but may also lose their ethnolinguistic *raison d'être*, finding themselves in a linguistic and cultural vacuum. As analysed in Chapter 2, the ongoing economic and demographic challenges in the Western Isles and other island groups exacerbate matters. The retention of young people and young families willing to contribute to community vitality will be central to any credible strategy of revitalisation.

The recommendations provided in the *Gaelic Crisis* promote a more equitable policy framework in which learners and Gaelic speakers cooperate in a spirit of mutual self-interest, transcending the false dichotomy and antagonism between native speakers and learners which, ironically, is a consequence of current policies and discourses. The proposed new framework aims to bring equity back into Gaelic policy and the resource allocation stemming from it.

Tha poileasaidh cànan ann an Alba air prìomhachas a thoirt dhan Ghàidhlig mar chleachdadh sòiseo-chultarach dàrnach agus/no roghainneil a' dèanamh cron air daoine dha bheil i na prìomh fhèin-aithne is i aig teis-meadhan am beatha làitheil. Tha am poileasaidh seo a tha cuimsichte air luchd-ionnsachaidh air tighinn am bàrr, mas fhìor, gus dèanamh suas airson mar a dh'fhàilnich air 'poileasaidh Gàidhlig' cur an aghaidh crìonadh na coimhearsnachd Ghàidhlig.

Airson poileasaidh Gàidhlig a dhèanamh creideasach, so-dhèanta agus cunbhalach, feumar dol an sàs ris a' chlaonadh seo ann am poileasaidh agus ann an solarachadh.

Ann an co-theacsa farsaing poileasaidh poblach na Gàidhlig ann an Alba, tha e cudromach a bhith ag aithneachadh nam feumalachdan eadar-dhealaichte a tha aig an dà phrìomh bhuidhinn shòisealta a bhuineas dhan Ghàidhlig, 's e sin a' choimhearsnachd Ghàidhlig thùsanach air an dàrna làimh, agus lionraidhean eile taobh a-muigh nan Eilean Siar air an làimh eile, a' gabhail a-steach dhaoine a tha ga bruidhinn mar dhàrna cànan. Tha an laigse dheama-chànanach a tha an lùib suidheachadh sòisealta na Gàidhlig anns a h-uile h-àite ann an Alba a' sealltainn gu bheil an dà bhuidhinn feumach air a chèile airson a bhith seasmach is soirbheachail.

Gun choimhearsnachd thùsanach Ghàidhlig a tha stèidhte air seasmachd mhaireannach, a tha mar thobar de dhualchas cultarach agus cànanach Gàidhealach, chan ann a-mhàin gur dòcha gum bi e doirbh do luchd-ionnsachaidh Gàidhlig a thogail, ach ma dh'fhaodte gun caill iad adhbhar is reusan son a bhith a' cleachdadh na Gàidhlig, is iad gan lorg fhèin ann am falamhachd chànanach agus chultarach. Mar a tha air a sgrùdadh ann an Caibideil 2, tha dùbhlain leantainneach eaconamach agus dheamagrafach anns na h-Eileanan Siar agus ann an sgìrean eileanach eile a' cur ris an duilgheadas. Bidh taic is cuideachadh ga thoirt gu greim a chumail air daoine òga agus teaghlaichean òga a tha deònach cur ri beòthalachd na coimhearsnachd aig teis-meadhan ro-innleachd chreideasach sam bith airson ath-bheòthachadh.

Tha na molaidhean a tha air an toirt seachad ann an *Gaelic Crisis* a' cur air adhart frèam-obrach poileasaidh nas cothromaiche anns am bi luchd-ionnsachaidh agus luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig a' co-obrachadh gu buannachd a chèile, is e a' faighinn seachad air an iomsgaradh bhreugach agus air an eascairdeas eadar feadhainn aig a bheil Gàidhlig bho thùs agus luchd-ionnsachadh a tha, gu h-ìoranta, na thoradh air poileasaidh agus deasbadan làthaireil. Tha am frèam-obrach ùr a tha air a mholadh ag amas air cothromachd a thoirt air ais do phoileasaidh na Gàidhlig agus dhan bhuileachadh ghoireasan a thig às.

10.3. Individualisation

Current policies and discourses regarding Gaelic promote an emphasis on individuals rather than communities, in line with the prevailing neo-liberal *zeitgeist*. This has given rise to a mutually reinforcing dynamic among those who benefit from the sectoral focus on Gaelic-medium education and broadcasting, on the promotion of Gaelic performance and the arts, and scholarship on Gaelic heritage and culture. This sectoral focus promotes the civic appeal of the cultural assets of the declining Gaelic speaker group without protecting the group's viability. One unintended outcome of this sectoralism is a feeling of stasis or paralysis in Gaelic communities, arising from the negative social impacts of not having agency in their own context.

The over-arching language policy for Gaelic is being implemented in a way that is dissociated from the severity of the challenge experienced by the speech community. This amounts to standing by while witnessing the dissolution of Gaelic culture and the speaker group, and yet claiming future aspirations for their cultural capital, divorced from the interests of the speakers themselves.

The underlying philosophy informing the National Gaelic Language Plans, emanating from the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005, has been deficient in relation to engagement with the communal requirements of supporting a threatened minority vernacular. In tandem with the learner bias, there is an institutional bias towards status-building initiatives to the detriment of community members who live with the social reality of language shift and demographic crisis in the vernacular community.

Institutionally led language policy which disregards societal outcomes should now be superseded by a strategic priority which places community-oriented language policy as the focus of Gaelic development to rebalance support measures towards the vernacular community.

10.3. Cuideam air an duine fa leth seach air coimhearsnachdan

Tha poileasaidhean agus deasbadaan làthaireil a thaobh na Gàidhlig a' brosnachadh cuideam air an duine fa leth seach air coimhearsnachdan, a' leantainn spiorad nua-libearalach na linn. Dh'adhbhraich seo dàimh a tha ga h-ath-neartachadh fhèin am measg na tha a' faighinn buannachd bhon chuideam roinneil air foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig agus craoladh, air brosnachadh nan ealan Gàidhlig, agus air sgoilearachd air dualchas agus cultar na Gàidhlig. Tha an cuideam roinneil seo a' cur air adhart tarraingeachd shìobhalta maoin chultarach an t-sluaigh Ghàidhlig a tha a' crìonadh, gun a bhith a' dìon beòthalachd an t-sluaigh. Am measg toraidhean a' chuideim roinneil seo ris nach robhas an dùil tha faireachadh de phairilis is de stadachd ann an coimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig air sàillibh na droch bhuaidh shòisealta a tha aig dìth chomas-gnìomha anns an t-suidheachadh aca fhèin.

Tha poileasaidh cànan airson na Gàidhlig san fharsaingeachd ga chur an gnìomh ann an dòigh nach eil idir ceangailte ri cho dona 's a tha an dùbhlán a tha ron choimhearsnachd chànan. Is ionann seo agus seasamh an dàrna taobh fhad 's a thathar a' faicinn lèirsgrìos a' chultair Ghàidhealaich agus sluagh a' chànan, ach aig an aon àm a bhith a' cur miannan an cèill airson a' chulpa chultaraich aca san àm ri teachd, is e air a dhealachadh bho mhath an luchd-labhairt fhèin.

Tha an fheallsanachd bhunaiteach a tha air cùl nam Planaichean Cànan Nàiseanta Gàidhlig, agus a thàinig a-mach à Achd na Gàidhlig (Alba) 2005, air a bhith easbhaidheach a thaobh dol an sàs ri feumalachdan na coimhearsnachd ann a bhith a' cumail taic ri mion-chànan dùthchasach a tha fo chunnart. A bharrachd air a' chlaon-bhàidh ri luchd-ionnsachaidh, tha claon-bhàidh institiuideach a dh'ionnsaigh iomairtean gus inbhe a thogail gu call buill a' choimhearsnachd a tha beò le fìor shuidheachadh sòisealta crìonadh a' chànan agus an staing dheamagrafach anns a' choimhearsnachd dhùthchasaich.

Bu chòir poileasaidh air a threòrachadh le institiuidean nach eil a' toirt spèis do thoraidean sòisealta a chur an dàrna taobh, agus prìomhachas ro-innleachdail a chur na àite a tha a' cur poileasaidh cànan ag amas air a' choimhearsnachd aig teis-meadhan leasachadh na Gàidhlig, airson ceumannan taice ath-chothromachadh a dh'ionnsaigh na coimhearsnachd dhùthchasaich.

10.4. Basis for future engagement

Productive engagement with the communities in the islands involves three fundamental prerequisites:

- a) Placing the Gaelic-speaking group at the centre of policy concerns
- b) Providing an honest narrative and description of their situation
- c) Developing an agenda of productive and coherent plans capable of encouraging participation in cooperative activity to improve the circumstances of Gaelic speakers.

This agenda will require a strategy which draws on collective strengths, ambitious vision and targeted leadership, as well as tenacious individual engagement.

11. A new model for Gaelic revitalisation in the vernacular community (Chapter 9)

The final chapter of the book outlines a proposed new model for community-led Gaelic revitalisation in the islands, termed the **Participatory Minority Language Cooperative**.

This model is based on a comprehensive language-in-society approach. The fragility of the Gaelic-speaking community of the Western Isles, highlighted in the *Gaelic Crisis*, indicates the need for a new paradigm which is focused on the societal and linguistic reality of the existing speaker group. Credible language development policies in this challenging context will initially depend on identifying existing or potential cooperative mechanisms embedded in the Gaelic community. Agreement on alternative pathways for development will be required before more successful language outcomes can be achieved.

Within the proposed framework of the Participatory Minority Language Cooperative, the central new structure suggested is **Urras na Gàidhlig** (the Gaelic Community Trust). Urras na Gàidhlig is a proposed community development trust for the Gaels. This community organisation will be based in the islands and under the direct control of a representative group of community members.

The Participatory Minority Language Cooperative framework will require Bòrd na Gàidhlig to rethink and re-evaluate its current direct role in Gaelic-focused development in the Western Isles, and channel responsibilities and resources to this new community-focused organisation, Urras na Gàidhlig.

10.4. Bunait airson dol an sàs ris a' choimhearsnachd anns an àm ri teachd

Tha na trì ro-riatanasan bunaiteach a leanas an lùib a bhith a' dol an sàs gu soirbheachail ann an coimhearsnachdan nan eilean:

- a) Sluagh na Gàidhlig a chur aig teis-meadhan ghnothaichean poileasaidh
- b) Cunntas agus tuairisgeul onarach den t-suidheachadh aca a thoirt seachad
- c) Clàr de phlanaichean tarraingeach agus ciallach a dhealbhadh a bhios comasach daoine a bhrosnachadh gus pàirt a ghabhail ann an gnìomh co-obrachail gus suidheachadh nan Gàidheal a leasachadh.

Bidh an clàr seo feumach air ro-innleachd a thairngeas air neartan coitcheann, lèirsinn àrd-amasach agus ceannardas cuimsichte, a bharrachd air obair dhealasach dhaoine fa leth.

11. Modail ùr airson ath-bheòthachadh na Gàidhlig anns a' choimhearsnachd dhùthchasaich (Caibideil 9)

Tha a' chaibideil mu dheireadh san leabhar a' mìneachadh modail ùr a tha air a mholadh airson ath-bheòthachadh na Gàidhlig air a stiùireadh leis a' choimhearsnachd, an **Co-chomann Mion-chànain Co-obrachail**. Bidh am modail seo stèidhte air dòigh-obrach choileanta a thaobh cànan anns a' chomann-shòisealta. Leis cho cugallach 's a tha coimhearsnachd na Gàidhlig anns na h-Eileanan Siar, mar a tha follaiseach ann an *Gaelic Crisis*, tha e soilleir gu bheil paradaidhm ùr a dhìth a bhios cuimsichte air fìor shuidheachadh sòisealta is cànanach luchd a' chànain a tha ann an-dràsta. Bidh poileasaidhean creideasach a thaobh leasachadh cànan anns a' cho-theacsa dhùbhlanach seo an crochadh anns a' chiad dol a-mach air a bhith a' lorg is ag aithneachadh uidheaman co-obrachaidh a tha no a dh'fhaodadh a bhith freumhaichte ann an coimhearsnachd na Gàidhlig. Bidh aonta a thaobh shlighean eadar-dhealaichte air adhart airson leasachadh a dhìth mus gabh toraidhean cànan nas soirbheachaile toirt gu buil.

Am broinn frèam-obrach a' Cho-chomainn Mhion-chànain Cho-obrachail, 's e **Urras na Gàidhlig** am prìomh structar ùr a tha air a mholadh. 'S e moladh airson urras leasachaidh choimhearsnachd do na Gàidheil a tha ann an Urras na Gàidhlig. Bidh a' bhuidheann choimhearsnachd seo stèidhichte anns na h-eileanan agus fo smachd dìreach buidheann riochdachail de bhuill choimhearsnachd.

Bheir frèam-obrach a' Cho-chomainn Mhion-chànain Cho-obrachail air Bòrd na Gàidhlig ath-bheòthachadh is ath-mheasadh a dhèanamh air an ròl dhìreach a tha aca ann an leasachadh cuimsichte air a' Ghàidhlig anns na h-Eileanan Siar, agus a bhith ag aiseag dhleastanasan agus ghoireasan chun na buidhne ùire seo a bhios cuimsichte air a' choimhearsnachd, Urras na Gàidhlig.

Similarly, community-related elements in the Gaelic language plans of public bodies based in the Western Isles should also be transferred to Urras na Gàidhlig, with the aim of bringing decision-making for instigating initiatives as close as possible to the target community. The location of the Urras and associated initiatives in the islands will also bring broader socio-economic benefits to the islands' communities, helping to tackle the daunting demographic and socio-economic challenges faced by the islands, which have been core factors in the detrimental linguistic situation of the islands.

Figure 4 gives an outline indication of the required components for the establishment of the Urras, following an initial phase of emergency refocus. The Participatory Minority Language Cooperative model of Urras na Gàidhlig envisages:

1. **A Representative Forum** [community assembly] to give a democratic backing and community consent to the work of the Urras
2. **A Board of Urras na Gàidhlig** [directors of the Urras] to manage the resources of group members and to sanction initiatives for the benefit of the membership
3. **An Executive of Urras na Gàidhlig** [executive staff of the Urras] to administer practical socio-economic and cultural initiatives, projects and family and community supports for the Gaels
4. **Research and advisory mechanisms** [targeted academic support] to undertake research and disseminate knowledge to the Urras.

Air an aon dòigh, bu chòir eileamaidean co-cheangailte ris a' choimhearsnachd ann am planaichean Gàidhlig bhuidhnean poblach a tha stèidhichte anns na h-Eileanan Siar aiseag gu Urras na Gàidhlig, leis an amas a bhith a' toirt cho-dhùnaidhean a thaobh iomairtean a ghabhail os làimh cho faisg 's a ghabhas air na coimhearsnachdan fa leth. Bidh suidheachadh an Urrais agus iomairtean co-cheangailte ris anns na h-eileanan cuideachd a' toirt leis buannachdan sòiseo-eaconamach nas fharsainge gu coimhearsnachdan nan eilean, is e a' cuideachadh gu dèiligeadh ris na dùbhlain dhubhach dheamagrafach agus shòiseo-eaconamach a tha mu choinneimh nan coimhearsnachdan, dùbhlain a tha air cur gu mòr ris an t-suidheachadh chunnartach a tha ceangailte ri cor na Gàidhlig anns na h-eileanan aig an àm seo.

Tha **Figear 4** a' toirt seachad cunntas farsaing air na co-phàirtean riatanach gus an t-Urras a stèidheachadh, às dèidh ùine de dh'ath-chuimseachadh èiginneach sa chiad dol a-mach. Tha modail a' Cho-chomainn Mhion-chànain Cho-obrachail airson Urras na Gàidhlig a' gabhail a-steach:

1. **Fòram Riochdachail** [seanadh coimhearsnachd] airson cùl-taic deamacratach agus aonta na coimhearsnachd a thoirt do dh'obair an Urrais
2. **Bòrd Urras na Gàidhlig** [stùirichean an Urrais] airson goireasan buill na buidhne a stiùireadh agus iomairtean a cheadachadh gu buannachd na ballrachd
3. **Àrd-oifigearan Urras na Gàidhlig** [àrd-luchd-obrach an Urrais] airson iomairtean practaigeach sòiseo-eaconamach agus cultarach, pròiseactan agus modhan-taice do theaghlaichean is do choimhearsnachdan airson nan Gàidheal a stiùireadh
4. **Uidheaman rannsachaidh** is comhairleachaidh [taic acadaimigeach chuimsichte] gus rannsachadh a ghabhail os làimh agus fiosrachadh a sgaoileadh dhan Urras.

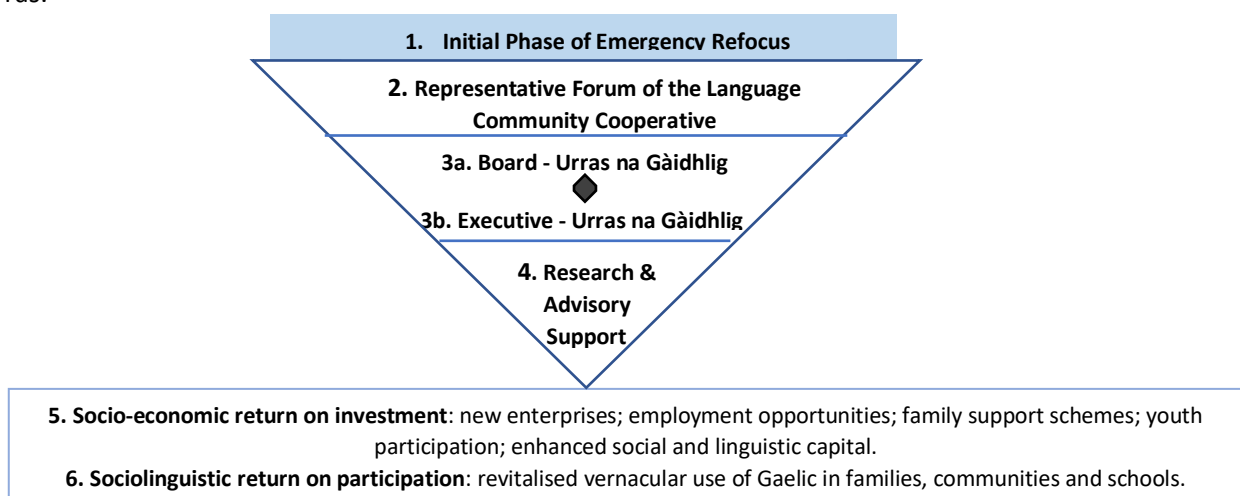


Figure 4: Participatory Minority Language Cooperative: Component Levels 1–6
Figear 4: Co-chomann Mion-chànain Co-obrachail: Irean Co-phàirte 1–6

A generalised schema of how the Participatory Minority Language Cooperative model is situated in the overall national policy framework for Gaelic is shown in **Figure 5**. The schema indicates the interaction of three complementary developmental strands:

- Strand A: National Gaelic Policies
- Strand B: Community Nexus for cooperation and participation
- Strand C: Leadership, Governance and Capacity Building and Implementation.

Tha sgeama coitcheann a tha a’ sealltainn mar a tha an Co-chomann Mion-chànain Co-obrachail suidhichte ann am frèam-obrach poileasaidh nàiseanta na Gàidhlig uile gu lèir ri fhaicinn ann am **Figear 5**. Tha an sgeama a’ comharrachadh mar a tha trì slighean leasachaidh air an cur ri chèile agus ag obair còmhla:

- Slighe A: Poileasaidhean Nàiseanta Gàidhlig
- Slighe B: Nasgadh Coimhearsnachd airson co-obrachadh agus compàirteachas
- Slighe C: Ceannardas, Riaghladh agus Togail Comais agus Coileanadh.

’S e buannachd a’ Cho-chomainn Mhion-chànain Cho-obrachail anns an sgeama ionadail agus nàiseanta, mar a tha air a shealltainn ann am **Figear 5**, gu bheil e a’ cur poileasaidh cànan airson sluagh dùthchasach na Gàidhlig ann am frèam-obrach coitcheann anns am bi buidhnean poblach agus lìonraidhean de luchd-ionnsachaidh a’ co-obrachadh gus beòthalachd choitcheann a’ chànain ann an Alba ath-neartachadh. Tha seo a’ gabhail a-steach a’ cho-theacsa dhùthchasaich taobh a-staigh nan eilean agus ann an lìonraidhean de luchd-labhairt ann an àitean eile, co-theacsa an luchd-ionnsachaidh agus Gàidhlig mar dhàrna cànan, cho math ri luach samhlaichail na Gàidhlig do nàisean na h-Alba.

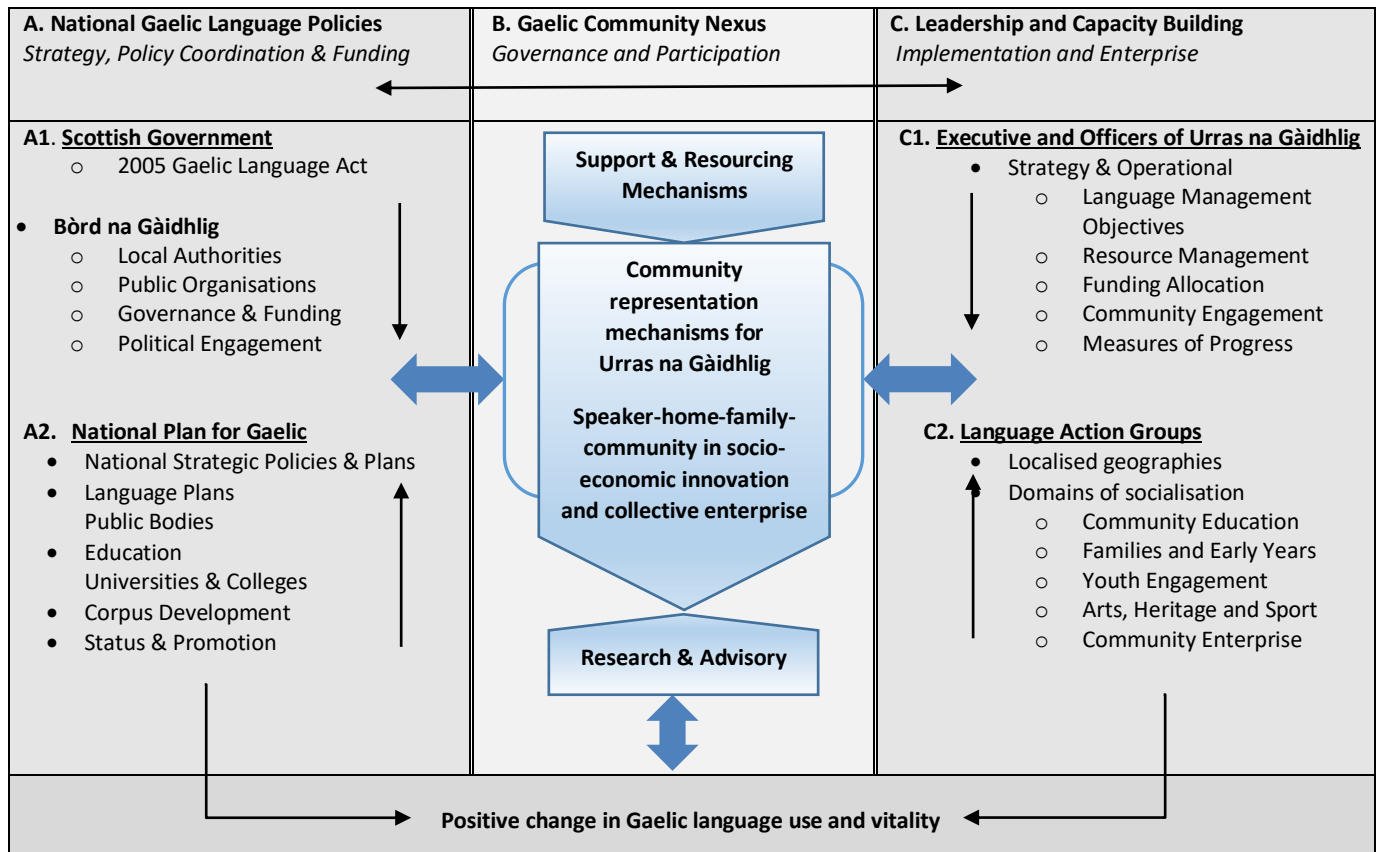


Figure 5: Schema of the key strands in the whole model

Figear 5: Sgeama de phrìomh shnàithean an sgeama gu lèir

The model comprises three interdependent strands:
(1) **Column A** comprises the strategic and institutional strand under the direct control of the Scottish Government. It entails the civic-national dimension of Gaelic policy, mainly through the development of language plans aimed at the sectoral promotion of Gaelic provision, administrative initiatives and language projects.

Tha trì slighean eadar-eisimeileach anns a’ mhodail:
(1) ’S e **Colbh A** an t-slighe ro-innleachdail agus institiuideach fo smachd dìreach Riaghaltas na h-Alba. Tha i a’ gabhail a-steach taobh sìobhalta-nàiseanta poileasaidh na Gàidhlig, airson a’ chuid as motha tro dhealbhadh phlanaichean cànan a tha ag amas air solarachadh na Gàidhlig aig ìre roinneil a bhrosnachadh, iomairtean rianachd agus pròiseactan cànan.

(2) **Column B** is the community strand under the direct management and control of the proposed new organisational mechanism, Urras na Gàidhlig, which aims to drive discrete revitalisation efforts to stimulate intergenerational transmission and the use of Gaelic in the community.

(3) **Column C** comprises the executive dimension of the model. It entails the professional support that the officers of Urras na Gàidhlig will offer to local communities to address developmental priorities, as identified by Urras na Gàidhlig.

12. Conclusion

The multi-modular research study presented in *The Gaelic Crisis in the Vernacular Community* has set out an evidence-based diagnosis and prognosis of the Gaelic speaker group's prevailing sociolinguistic situation in the Western Isles, Staffin and Tiree, along with a positive, and potentially productive, prescription for addressing the challenge.

The proposed response can be envisaged in the following positive and rational sequence of events:

- a) an admission by the community and public bodies that the situation is critical
- b) an acceptance among public bodies that the current policy interventions for the Gaelic vernacular speaker group are not fit for purpose
- c) an acknowledgment that an alternative approach is required if the complete loss of vernacular Gaelic is to be averted
- d) a collective willingness to bolster the societal vitality of the Gaelic-speaking group
- e) a reasonably swift re-orientation of language policy and planning efforts (away from formal symbolic institutional provision) to re-balance power, financial provision and strategic resources in favour of embedded community groups and Gaelic familial and social networks, possessing the capabilities and the desire to initiate a process of change aimed at language-in-society revitalisation.

(2) 'S e **Colbh B** an t-slighe choimhearsnachd fo rianachd agus smachd dìreach an uidheim eagrachaidh ùir a tha air a mholadh, Urras na Gàidhlig, a tha ag amas air diofar oidhirpean ath-bheòthachaidh a chur air adhart airson toirt seachad na Gàidhlig dhan ath ghinealach agus cleachdadh a' chànan anns a' choimhearsnachd a bhrosnachadh.

(3) 'S e **Colbh C** taobh stiùiridh a' mhodail. Tha e a' gabhail a-steach na taice phroifeiseantaich a bhios oifigearan Urras na Gàidhlig a' toirt seachad do choimhearsnachdan ionadail airson dèiligeadh ri prìomhachasan leasachaidh, mar a bhios iad gan aithneachadh le Urras na Gàidhlig.

12. Co-dhùnadh

Tha an rannsachadh ioma-mhodalach a tha air a thaisbeanadh ann an *The Gaelic Crisis in the Vernacular Community* a' toirt seachad sealladh stèidhte air fianais air suidheachadh sòiseo-chànanach nan Gàidheal san latha an-diugh anns na h-Eileanan Siar, ann an Stafainn agus ann an Tiriodh, a bharrachd air molaidhean dearbhach, agus ma dh'fhaodte adhartach, airson a dhol an sàs ris an dùbhlán.

Faodar an fhreagairt a tha air a moladh a thuigsinn anns an t-sreath dhearbhadh agus reusanta de thachartasan a leanas:

- a) aideachadh leis a' choimhearsnachd agus le buidhnean poblach gu bheil an suidheachadh èiginneach
- b) aideachadh am measg bhuidhnean poblach gu bheil poileasaidhean a tha ann an gnìomh an-dràsta airson sluagh dùthchasach na Gàidhlig mì-fhreagarrach
- c) aithneachadh gu bheil dòighean-obrach eadar-dhealaichte a dhìth ma thathar airson call iomlan na Gàidhlig dhùthchasaich a sheachnadh
- d) fios a leigeil bho gach taobh gu bheil deònach beòthalachd shòisealta an t-sluaigh Ghàidhlig a neartachadh
- e) car a chur ann an oidhirpean poileasaidh agus planadh cànan (air falbh bho sholarachadh institiuideach foirmeil agus samhlaich) cho luath 's a ghabhas airson cumhachd, solarachadh maoinachaidh agus goireasan ro-innleachdail ath-chothromachadh airson math bhuidhnean freumhaichte anns a' choimhearsnachd agus lìonraidhean Gàidhlig teaghlaich agus sòisealta, aig a bheil comas agus miann pròiseas atharrachaidh a tha ag amas air ath-bheòthachadh cànan anns a' chomann-shòisealta a thoirt gu buil.

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Further information: Further additional data and information on the outputs of the research is available at: www.uhi.ac.uk/vernacularcommunity and by contacting: Prof. Conchúr Ó Giollagáin, UHI Language Sciences Institute, The University of the Highlands and Islands, 12b Ness Walk, Inverness, Scotland, IV3 5SQ. E-mail: sm00cog@uhi.ac.uk

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Taing: Fhuair an rannsachadh seo taic bho Shoillse, an Lionradh Nàiseanta Rannsachaidh airson Glèidheadh agus Ath-bheòthachadh na Gàidhlig. Tha na h-ùghdaran fada an comain luchd-obrach ann an Comhairle nan Eilean Siar airson na thug iad seachad de thaic ann a bhith a' cur air dòigh eileamaidean de dh'obair-raoin an rannsachaidh; nam pàrantan agus nam manaidsearan aig na sgoiltean-àraich a ghabh pàirt anns an rannsachadh; agus luchd-obrach is sgoilearan Sgoil MhicNeacail, Steòrnabhagh, Leòdhas; Sgoil Sir E Scott, an Tairbeart, na Hearadh; Sgoil Bhàgh a' Chaisteil, Barraigh; agus Sgoil Lionacleit, Beinn nam Fadhla. Tha sinn air leth taingeil dhan luchd-chomhairleachaidh ann an eileanan Sgalpaigh, Ghriomasaigh agus Èirisgeigh a bha deiseil is deònach an cuid comhairle agus treòrachaidh a thoirt seachad. Os cionn a h-uile nì, ge-tà, bu toil leinn ar taing a chur an cèill do mhuintir nan Eilean Siar, an Eilein Sgitheanaich agus Thiriodh a ghabh pàirt ann an diofar eileamaidean den rannsachadh. Tha sinn nan comain uile airson an cuid ama agus sheallaidhean a thoirt dhuinn.

Fiosrachadh a bharrachd: Tha dàta agus fiosrachadh a bharrachd air toraidhean an rannsachadh ri fhaighinn aig: www.uhi.ac.uk/vernacularcommunity agus tro bhith a' conaltradh ris an Àrd-ollamh Conchúr Ó Giollagáin, Institiud Rannsachaidh Cànaidh, Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd agus nan Eilean, 12b Slighe Nis, Inbhir Nis, Alba, IV3 5SQ. E-mail: sm00cog@uhi.ac.uk

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Airson nan daoine anns na h-eileanan a thug cuideachadh leis an obair rannsachaidh seo agus airson nan daoine a chuireas am fiosrachadh gu feum.