

<p>Plana Lìbhrigidh NTS2 - Co-chomhairle air Measaidhean Buaidh Freagairt bho Bhòrd na Gàidhlig 09 Dùbhlachd 2021</p>	<p>NTS2 Delivery Plan - Impact Assessments Consultation Response by Bòrd na Gàidhlig 09 December 2021</p>
<p>Co-chomhairle air Measadh Buaidh Coimhearsnachd Eileanach</p> <p>11) A thaobh an sgrìonadh ICIA, a bheil sibh a' smaoinichadh gu bheil buaidh sam bith air coimhearsnachdan eileanach nach eil sinn air comharrachadh? Tha seo a' gabhail a-steach an dà chuid deagh bhuidh agus droch bhuidh.</p> <p>Tha/ Chan eil / Chan eil fhios agam</p> <p>Cha deach a' bhuidh air a' Ghàidhlig ann an coimhearsnachdan eileanach a chomharrachadh.</p> <p>Ann an Cunntas-sluaigh 2011, bha sluaigh iomlan de mu 58,000 eadar na 31 eileanan ann an sgìrean Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd, Comhairle Earra Ghàidheal is Bòd, Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath agus Comhairle nan Eilean Siar a bha 3 bliadhna a dh'aois no nas sine. Bha sgìlean Gàidhlig aig mu 22,000 (39%) aca - fada nas àirde na ìre chuibheasach na h-Alba de 1.7%. B' e an cuibheas meadhanach thairis air na 31 eileanan uile 26%.</p> <p>Ann an 13 de na h-eileanan, bha sgìlean Gàidhlig aig còrr is 40% de na daoine. Bha a' mhòr-chuid aca taobh a-staigh Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (11) agus Ratharsair agus Tiriodh.</p> <p>Tha sgìlean Gàidhlig aig beagan is an dàrna leth de na daoine aois 16-24 sna h-Eileanan Siar (51%) an taca ri cuibheas Albannach de 2%.</p> <p>Gu h-iomlan, tha na h-eileanan seo air a' chosta an iar a' dèanamh suas c1% de shluaigh na h-Alba a tha 3 bliadhna a dh'aois no nas sine - ach tha barrachd air cairteal (26%) de luchd-còmhnaidh na h-Alba aig a bheil sgìlean Gàidhlig a' fuireach annta. Mar sin, chan e a-mhàin gu bheil gu</p>	<p>Island Communities Impact Assessment Consultation</p> <p>11) Taking into account the ICIA screening, do you think there are any impacts we have not identified for island communities? This includes both positive and negative impacts.</p> <p>Yes / No / Don't Know</p> <p>The impact on the Gaelic language in island communities has not been identified.</p> <p>In the 2011 Census the 31 individual islands in Highland, Argyll and Bute, North Ayrshire and Eilean Siar had a total population of around 58,000 aged 3 years or above. Around 22,000 (39%) had some skills in Gaelic - vastly above the Scottish average of 1.7%. The median figure across all 31 islands was 26%.</p> <p>In 13 of the islands the proportion of residents with some Gaelic skills was over 40%. These were largely within Eilean Siar (11), plus Raasay and Tiree.</p> <p>Just over half (51%) of people aged 16-24 in Eilean Siar have some Gaelic skills - compared to a Scottish average of 2%.</p> <p>Overall, these west coast islands account for c1% of the Scottish population aged 3 years or above - but for more one quarter (26%) of Scottish residents with some Gaelic skills. Therefore, the Gaelic language is not only important to these</p>

bheil a’ Ghàidhlig cudromach do na h-eileanan seo ach gu bheil seasmhachd nan eileanan riatanach airson seasmhachd agus fàs leantainneach na Gàidhlig. Seo ann an co-theacsa far a bheil “Riaghaltas na h-Alba ag aithneachadh gu bheil a’ Ghàidhlig na pàirt bhunasach de dhualchas, dearbh-aithne nàiseanta agus beatha chultarail na h-Alba”¹.

A bharrachd air seo, tha Plana Nàiseanta nan Eilean aig Riaghaltas na h-Alba ag ràdh:

“Tha Riaghaltas na h-Alba ag aithneachadh cho cudromach ‘s a tha a’ Ghàidhlig do dh’iomadh coimhearsnachd eileanach, agus cho cudromach ‘s a tha na coimhearsnachdan eileanach far a bheil Gàidhlig air a bruidhinn do sheasmhachd na Gàidhlig ann an Alba”.

‘S e am prìomh amas aig Plana Cànain Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig 2018-2023² gun tèid a’ Ghàidhlig a chleachdadh nas trice, le barrachd dhaoine ann am barrachd shuidheachaidhean”. Tha e an uair sin ag ràdh “gun toir cùisean eile buaidh air an amas seo”. Tha iad seo a’ gabhail a-steach cùisean eaconamach agus bun-structar agus tha am Plana a’ toirt fa-near gun dèan Bòrd na Gàidhlig “cinnteach gun toirear fa-near dhan bhuaidh a th’ aca air a’ Ghàidhlig agus gun tèid dèiligeadh ri sin”.

Seo is adhbhar gu bheil sin a’ cur freagairt a-steach dhan cho-chomhairle seo. Tha sinn ag aithneachadh gu bheil dòigh-obrach iomlanach a dhìth airson coimhearsnachdan eileanach seasmhach agus mar sin airson a bhith a’ gleidheadh a’ chànain.

Mar a tha am plana ag ràdh: “tha eaconamaidh fhallain, gu sònraichte ann an coimhearsnachdan eileanach, agus coimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig dùthchail, deatamach airson seasmhachd na Gàidhlig san àm ri teachd”. Tha e cuideachd ag ràdh:

islands, but these islands’ sustainability is essential to the continued sustainability and growth of the Gaelic language. This is in a context where “The Scottish Government recognises that Gaelic is an integral part of Scotland’s heritage, national identity and current cultural life”⁸.

In addition, Scottish Government’s National Islands Plan states:

“Scottish Government recognises the importance of the Gaelic language to many island communities, and the importance of the Gaelic speaking island communities to the survival and sustainability of Gaelic in Scotland”.

The National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-2023⁹ has the aim that Gaelic “is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations”. It goes on to state that “other issues impact on this aim”. These include economic and infrastructural issues and the Plan notes that Bòrd na Gàidhlig “will ensure their impact on Gaelic is recognised and addressed”.

That is why we are responding to this consultation. We recognise that a holistic approach is required for sustainable island communities and thus for sustaining the Gaelic language.

As the Plan states, “a healthy economy, particularly in island and rural Gaelic-speaking communities, is vital to the future of Gaelic”. It also states that:

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-scottish-governments-draft-gaelic-language-plan-2021-2026/>

² <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/BnG-NGLP-18-23-1.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-scottish-governments-draft-gaelic-language-plan-2021-2026/>

⁹ <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/BnG-NGLP-18-23-1.pdf>



Feumaidh coimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig dùthchail is eileanach ath-ùrachadh ann an dòigh a chumas agus a bhios tarraingeach do dh'òigridh. Bidh fuasglaidhean innleachdach a dhìth bho dhiofar luchd-compàirt (a' gabhail a-steach) goireasan còmhdhail cunbhalach aig prìs reusanta".

Tha Plana Nàiseanta nan Eilean cuideachd a' toirt iomradh air a' cheangal eadar seasmhachd eaconamach agus dheamografach nan coimhearsnachdan eileanach agus seasmhach na Gàidhlig:

- “Dèan cinnteach gu bheil poileasaidhean ag amas air luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig a ghlèidheadh ann an coimhearsnachd Gàidhlig eileanach no an tàladh ann”.
- “Gum bithear daonnan a' beachdachadh air a' Ghàidhlig ann an cùisean co-cheangailte ri leasachadh eaconamach ann an sgìrean le dualchas Gàidhlig”.
- “[’S e] a' chùis as cudromaiche do sgìrean beag-shluaghach an àireamh bheag de chlann agus òigridh”.
- “Mar phrìomhachas, bidh sinn a' cruthachadh bheachdan air mar a bhrosnaicheas sinn òigridh gus fuireach anns na h-eileanan, a bhith tilleadh no ag imrich do na h-eileanan”.
- “dèan cinnteach gu bheil lìbhrigeadh a' Phlana a' beachdachadh air ùidhean agus prìomhachasan òigridh”.

Feumar a' bhuaidh air a' Ghàidhligaig na gnìomhan STPR 2 a chaidh a mholadh agus aig poileasaidhean ro-innleachdail a thoirt a-steach dhan làn Mheasadh Buaidh Coimhearsnachd Eileanach a tha fhathast ri dhèanamh.

13) Dè na gnìomhan a bharrachd a bu toil leibh fhaicinn ann am Planaichean Lìbhrigidh airson NTS2 san Àm ri Teachd?

A bhith a' toirt a-staigh siubhail an-asgaidh air aiseagan do dhaoine fo aois 22 a bharrachd air siubhail an-asgaidh air busaichean a-mhàin.

Tha sinn fada den bheachd:

“Gaelic-speaking island and rural communities must be re-energised in a way that will retain and attract young people. This will require innovative solutions... (including)...access to affordable and reliable transport links”.

The National Islands Plan also refers to the link between economic and demographic sustainability of island communities and the sustainability of the Gaelic language:

- “Ensure that policies aim to retain and attract Gaelic speakers to live and work in Gaelic speaking island communities”.
- “In areas that have a Gaelic heritage, Gaelic should always be considered in matters of economic development”.
- “The key demographic issue for sparsely populated areas is ...the relatively small number of children and young people”.
- “As a priority, we will co-develop ideas and actions to support and encourage young people to remain on, move to or return to the islands”.
- “Ensure that the delivery of the Plan fully considers the interests and priorities of young people”.

The impact on the Gaelic language of the proposed STPR 2 actions and strategic policies must be included in the full ICIA that is still to be produced.

13) What further actions would you like to see included in future NTS2 Delivery Plans?

The introduction of free ferry travel for under 22s rather than this being limited to bus services.

We strongly believe that:



- Gum faodadh daoine òga a tha a’ fuireach ann an coimhearsnachdan eileanach a bhith fo ana-cothrom oir feumaidh iad aiseagan a chleachdadh gus cothroman a ruigsinn agus chan e còmhail rathaid a-mhàin.
- Gu bheil siubhal air aiseag an-asgaidh deatamach gus dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil co-ionannachd ann eadar daoine òga sna h-eileanan agus an co-aisean air tìr-mòr.

Nach eil siubhal bus an-asgaidh leis fhèin a’ dèiligeadh ris na cosgaisean siubhail uile a tha mu choinneamh dhaoine òga a tha a’ fuireach anns na h-eileanan. Tha seo air sgàth gum feumar siubhal air aiseag mar phàirt den turas aca - ge b’ e a bheil iad a’ dol gu tìr-mòr no eadar eilean. Tha mòran de na cuairtean sin airson cothrom fhaighinn air obair, seirbheisean agus cothroman eile nach eil rim faighinn san eilean aca fhèin.

Chan eil ach glè bheag de sheirbheisean bus ann an cuid de na dh’eileanan. Tha seo a’ fàgail gur e an t-aiseag am modh còmhail as cudromaiche do dh’òigridh. Chuir Bòrd na Gàidhlig freagairt a-steach dhan cho-chomhairle air siubhal an-asgaidh air busaichean airson daoine fo aois 22 san Ògmhios a’ dèanamh nan aon phuingean³.

Mur a tèid faraidhean aiseig an-asgaidh a thoirt dhan fheadhainn fo aois 22, cha choilean Còmhail Alba a h-amasan foillsichte a bhith:

- A’ cur ri neo-eisimeileachd na h-òigridh.
- A’ cuideachadh dhaoine òga gus cothrom fhaighinn air foghlam, cosnadh agus cur-seachadan, gu sònraichte airson teaghlaichean aig a bheil teachd-a-steach ìosal.

Seo ann an co-theacsa far a bheil cosgaisean bith-beò nas àirde do dh’eileanach an taca ri daoine air tìr-mòr na RA⁴.

- Young people living in island communities could be disadvantaged because they have to use ferries and not just road transport to access opportunities.
- Free ferry travel is essential to ensure parity between island dwelling young people and their mainland peers.

Provision of free bus travel alone does not address the totality of travel costs faced by young people living in the islands. That is because some of their trip making requires ferry travel - whether to the mainland or within their island group. Many of these trips are to access employment, services and other opportunities which are not available on their own island.

On some islands bus services are very limited. This makes the ferry the most important public transport mode for young people. Bòrd na Gàidhlig provided a response to the consultation on free bus travel for under-22s in June 2021 making these same points¹⁰.

By not providing free ferry fares for those aged under 22 Transport Scotland will not achieve its stated aims of:

- Increasing young people’s independence.
- Helping young people access education, employment and leisure, particularly for low-income families.

This is in a context of already higher living costs for island residents compared to the UK mainland¹¹.

³ <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Free-Bus-Travel-for-Under-22s-BnG-FINAL.pdf>

⁴ www.hie.co.uk/media/6441/aplusminimumplusincomeplusstandardplusforplusremotepusruralpluscotlandplus-plusapuspolicyplusupdateplus2016.pdf

¹⁰ <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Free-Bus-Travel-for-Under-22s-BnG-FINAL.pdf>

¹¹ www.hie.co.uk/media/6441/aplusminimumplusincomeplusstandardplusforplusremotepusruralpluscotlandplus-plusapuspolicyplusupdateplus2016.pdf



Tha mòran eileanan a' dèiligeadh ri dùbhlain co-cheangailte ri bhith a' cumail/a' tàladh àireamhan iomchaidh de dhaoine òga. Mar eisimpleir, eadar 2011 agus 2018 thathar a' meas gun do thuit na h-àireamhan sa bhuidhinn aois 16-24 mu 8% ann an Uibhist agus 10% ann an Leòdhas. Tha sin ann an co-theacsa far a bheil ceudad nas ìsle den t-sluagh air fad aois 16-24 san dà eilean sin na tha sa chuibheas Albannach⁵.

Chan eil na ro-aithrisean as ùire rim faighinn ach aig ìre nan ùghdarrasan ionadail. Thathar an dùil gum bi tuiteam de 6.1% ann an àireamh-sluaigh Innse Gall eadar 2018 agus 2028. Tha seo tòrr nas àirde na an tuiteam ris a bheilear an dùil air a' Ghàidhealtachd agus sna h-Eileanan (1.2%) agus gu math eadar-dhealaichte ris an àrdachadh ris a bheilear an dùil ann an Alba (1.8%).

Tha grunn nithean a' toirt buaidh air àireamh nan òigrìdh sna h-eileanan. Ach, tha rannsachadh⁶ airson lomairt na Gàidhealtachd agus nan Eilean mu bheachdan agus miannan dhaoine aois 15-30 a' nochdadh cho cudromach 's a tha còmh-dhail mar nì a tha a' toirt buaidh air tarraingeachd na sgìre. A rèir aithisg sgìreil nan Eileanan Siar:

“A dh'aindeoin Cosgais Co-ionann ri Rathad (RET) airson aiseagan tha cosgaisean a bhith a' siubhal far eilein fhathast na dhùbhlain mòr”

Fhuair e a-mach cuideachd gum feumadh còrr air trì chairteal de dhaoine òga (78%) ann an Innse Gall gabhail ri solar còmh-dhail mar rud a dh'fheumadh iad gabhail ris gus fuireach anns na h-eileanan. Bha am figear airson Uibhist is Barraigh na b' àirde buileach (87%). Chaidh còmh-dhail aig prìs ruigsinneach, a bha earbsach agus cunbhalach ainmeachadh le còrr is leth (59%) den luchd-freagairt mar rud a bha deatamach gus a' Ghàidhealtachd agus na h-Eileanan a bhith na àite tarraingeach airson fuireach, obair agus foghlam.

Many islands face challenges in retaining/attracting sufficient numbers of young people. For example, between 2011 and 2018 the numbers in the 16-24 age group are estimated to have fallen by 8% in Uist and by 10% in Lewis. That is in a context where these two islands have a lower share of total population aged 16-24 than the Scottish average¹².

Recent population forecasts are only available at local authority level. There is a projected fall of 6.1% in the population of the Outer Hebrides between 2018 and 2028. That is much higher than the projected fall in the Highlands and Islands (1.2%) and in contrast to the forecast *increase* in Scotland (1.8%).

A range of factors account for the numbers of young people living in the islands. However, research¹³ for Highlands and Islands Enterprise into the attitudes and aspirations of people aged 15-30 highlights the importance of transport as a factor affecting the attractiveness of the region. The area report for the Outer Hebrides states that:

“Despite Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) ferry fares... the cost of off-island travel remains a significant issue”

It also found that more than three quarters of young people (78%) in the Outer Hebrides have had to accept transport provision as a compromise they had to make to live in the islands. The figure for Uist and Barra was even higher (87%). Affordable, reliable, and well-scheduled transport was cited by more than half (59%) as a factor required to make the Highlands and Islands an attractive place to live, work and study.

⁵ Tùs: Oifis na Stadastaig Nàiseanta

⁶ <https://www.hie.co.uk/research-and-reports/our-reports/2018/may/31/yp-research/>

¹² Source: Office for National Statistics

¹³ <https://www.hie.co.uk/research-and-reports/our-reports/2018/may/31/yp-research/>



Bidh tarraingeachd nan eilean do dhaoine òga a' toirt buaidh air na co-dhùnaidhean aca a thaobh a bhith a' fuireach sna h-eileanan no ann an àiteigin eile. Bheir cosgaisean siubhail buaidh air co-dhùnaidhean mar seo. Mar sin, tha e a' toirt buaidh air soirbheas agus seasmhachd nan coimhearsnachdan eileanach.

Tha Riaghaltas na h-Alba ag aithneachadh nan cosgaisean siubhail a bharrachd aig daoine a tha a' fuireach ann an eileanan mar-thà. Mar eisimpleir, tro bhith a' toirt a-steach Cosgais Co-ionann ri Rathad airson faraidhean aiseig agus còmhdhail adhair air prìs lasaichte tron Sgeama Lasachadh Adhair.

Mura tèid aghaidh a chur air cosgaisean faradh aiseig do dhaoine òga, chan eil eileanan far a bheil Gàidhlig ga bruidhinn cho tarraingeach an coimeas ri àiteachan air tìr-mòr. Mar sin, tha e a' toirt buaidh air seasmhachd nan coimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig eileanach san àm ri teachd. Bheir seo droch bhuidh air cleachdadh na Gàidhlig - agus chan ann a-mhàin dìreach sna h-eileanan buntainneach ach ann an Alba air fad cuideachd. Mar sin, cha bhi am moladh làithreach a bhith a' toirt seachad faraidhean an-asgaidh airson busaichean a-mhàin a' coileanadh amasan Còmhdhail Alba, Plana Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig no Plana Nàiseanta nan Eilean.

Mur a tèid dèiligeadh ri cosgaisean faraidhean aiseig do dhaoine òga, bidh buaidh gu math eadar-dhealaichte air cuid de na coimhearsnachdan eileanach an coimeas ri eileanan far nach eilear a' bruidhinn Gàidhlig agus ri tìr-mòr na h-Alba. **Mar sin, tha seo a' toirt droch bhuidh air a' Ghàidhlig.**

Tha seo a bharrachd air an droch bhuidh air co-ionannachd làimhseachaidh aig daoine òga anns a h-uile coimhearsnachd ann an Alba.

Faodar dèiligeadh ris an droch bhuidh air coimhearsnachdan eileanach agus air a' Ghàidhlig le bhith a' toirt a-steach siubhal aiseig an-asgaidh a bharrachd air siubhal bus an-asgaidh.

Le bhith a' dèanamh seo, bhiodh Ministearan na h-Alba a' coileanadh an riatanais aca:

The attractiveness of the islands for young people will affect their decisions to live there or somewhere else. The level of transport costs will influence such decisions. Thus, it affects the future prosperity and sustainability of the island communities.

Scottish Government already acknowledge the additional transport costs that island residents face. For example, through the introduction of Road Equivalent Tariff ferry fares and reduced air fares through the Air Discount Scheme.

Failing to address ferry fare costs for young people will make Gaelic speaking islands less attractive compared to mainland areas. Thus, it affects the future viability of Gaelic speaking island communities. This will have a negative impact on the use of the Gaelic language – and not only in the affected islands but also in Scotland as a whole. Therefore, the current proposal to limit free fares to bus travel will not fully meet the objectives of Transport Scotland, the National Gaelic Language Plan nor the National Islands Plan.

The failure to address ferry fare costs for young people will have a significantly different impact on some island communities compared to non-Gaelic speaking islands and mainland Scotland. **That is, a negative impact on the Gaelic language.**

That is in addition to the negative impact on the equity of treatment of young people in all communities in Scotland.

The adverse effects on the islands communities and the Gaelic language can be addressed by including free ferry travel in addition to free bus travel.

In doing so, Scottish Ministers would meet their obligation to:



“measadh a dhèanamh air an ìre is gu bheil Ministearan na h-Alba den bheachd gun gabh am poileasaidh, ro-innleachd no seirbheis a leasachadh ann an dòigh a bheir piseach air a’ bhuaidh a bhios aig an reachdas air coimhearsnachdan eileanach”. ”⁷

Tha an sgrìobhainn co-comhairleachaidh ag ràdh “gun deach Measadh Buaidh Coimhearsnachd Eileanach a dhèanamh air R1-1E bho chionn ghoirid. Sheall am measadh buaidh nach eilear den bheachd gu bheil busaichean cho cudromach do choimhearsnachdan eileanach ri aiseagan eadar-eileanach”.

Ach cha deach na toraidhean bho cho-chomhairle Còmhaidh Alba “Measadh Buaidh Coimhearsnachd Eileanach air coimhearsnachdan eileanach bho shiubhal bus an-asgaidh do dh’òigridh fo aois 22” fhoillseachadh fhathast Seo a dh’aindeoin is gun do dhùin a’ cho-chomhairle do bheachdan san Iuchar 2021. Bu chòir am Measadh Buaidh Coimhearsnachd Eileanach fhoillseachadh sa bhad air adhbharan follaiseachd agus gus an deasbad leantainneach air faraidhean aiseig an-asgaidh do dhaoine fo 22 bliadhna a dh’aois fhiosrachadh.

“assess the extent to which the legislation can be developed in such a manner as to improve ...for island communities, the outcomes resulting from the legislation”¹⁴

The consultation document states that “An ICIA on R1-1E has recently been completed. The assessment shows that buses are not considered as important to island communities as inter-island ferries”.

However, the findings from Transport Scotland’s consultation “ICIA Impact on Islands Communities of Free Bus Travel for Young People Under 22” remain unpublished. That is, despite it having closed to responses in June 2021. In the interest of transparency and to inform the ongoing debate on free ferry fares for under 22s that ICIA should be published forthwith.

⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/stakeholder-consultation-document-island-communities-impact-assessment/>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/stakeholder-consultation-document-island-communities-impact-assessment/>

