

<p>Seirbheis Aiseagan a tha Nuadh is Seasmhach do dh'Alba Freagairt bho Bhòrd na Gàidhlig 26 Lùnastal 2022</p>	<p>A Modern and Sustainable Ferry Service for Scotland Response by Bòrd na Gàidhlig 26 August 2022</p>
<p>'S e am prìomh amas aig Plana Cànain Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig 2018-2023¹ 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".</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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:</p> <p>"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 còmh-dhail cunbhalach aig prìs reusanta".</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</p>	<p>The National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-2023³ 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".</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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:</p> <p>"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".</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</p>

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

³ <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/BnG-NGLP-18-23-1.pdf>

Eilean Siar a bha 3 bliadhna a dh'aois no nas sine. Bha sgilean 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%.

Ann an 13 de na h-eileanan, bha sgilean 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.

Tha sgilean 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%.

Gu h-iomlan, tha na h-eileanan seo air a' chosta an iar a' dèanamh suas c1% de shluagh 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 sgilean Gàidhlig a' fuireach annta. **Mar sin, chan e a-mhàin gu bheil gu 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"².

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".

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 ghèidheadh ann an coimhearsnachd Gàidhlig eileanach no an tàladh ann".

Scottish average of 1.7%. The median figure across all 31 islands was 26%.

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.

Just over half (51%) of people aged 16-24 in Eilean Siar have some Gaelic skills - compared to a Scottish average of 2%.

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 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"⁴.

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 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".

² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-scottish-governments-draft-gaelic-language-plan-2021-2026/>

⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-scottish-governments-draft-gaelic-language-plan-2021-2026/>



- “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 libhrigeadh a’ Phlana a’ beachdachadh air ùidhean agus prìomhachasan òigridh”.

Air an adhbhar seo, tha seirbheis aiseig ùr-nodha agus seasmach do dh’eileanan na h-Alba air leth fhèin cudromach ann a bhith a’ cumail suas coimhearsnachdan Ghàidhlig eileanach, agus ann a bhith a’ gleidheadh a’ chàin agus a’ chultair.

Tha barrachd fiosrachaidh mu na molaidhean againn san fhreagairt againn do Phlana Lìbhrigidh NTS2 - Co-chomhairle air Measaidhean Buaidh⁵.

- “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”.

For these reasons, the importance of a modern and sustainable ferry service for Scottish islands is of utmost importance in sustaining the island communities of Gaelic speakers, and in sustaining the language and culture.

Further information on our recommendations is included in our response to the NTS2 Delivery Plan - Impact Assessments Consultation⁵.

⁵ <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/NTS2-Delivery-Plan-Impact-Assessments-Consultation-BNG-FINAL-GE.pdf>

