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| <p>Co-chomhairle ath-leasachadh taghaidh Riaghaltas na h-Alba</p> <p>Freagairt Bhòrd na Gàidhlig</p> <p>07 Màrt 2023</p> <p>https://consult.gov.scot/constitution-and-cabinet/electoral-reform/</p> | <p>Scottish Government Electoral reform consultation</p> <p>Bòrd na Gàidhlig Response</p> <p>07 March 2023</p> <p>https://consult.gov.scot/constitution-and-cabinet/electoral-reform/</p> |
| <p>Ceist 12: Nur beachd-sa, dè a ghabhadh dèanamh gu nàiseanta no gu h-ionadail gus ìrean clàraidh a leasachadh, gu sònraichte am measg bhuidhnean nach eil air an riochdachadh gu leòr leithid daoine òga agus nàiseantaich chèin?</p> <p>Stèidhichte fo Achd na Gàidhlig (Alba) 2005, 's e buidheann poblach neo-roinneil de Riaghaltas na h-Alba a th' ann am Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Is e a' phrìomh bhuidheann ann an Alba air a bheil dleastanas gus leasachadh Gàidhlig a chur air adhart agus gus comhairle a thoirt do Mhinistearan na h-Alba mu chùisean Gàidhlig.</p> <p>'S e amas a' Phlana Cànanain Nàiseanta Ghàidhlig 2018-23¹ gun tèid "a' Ghàidhlig a chleachdadh nas trice, le barrachd dhaoine agus ann an raon nas fharsainge de shuidheachaidhean". Bheirear seo gu buil le bhith a' cuimseachadh air:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cur am meud cleachdadh na Gàidhlig. • Cur am meud ionnsachadh na Gàidhlig. • Cur air adhart deagh ìomhaigh den Ghàidhlig. <p>'S e ar n-amas gum faicear is gun cluinnear a' Ghàidhlig gu làitheil air feadh na h-Alba, air dhòigh 's gun tèid</p> | <p>Question 12: What do you think could be done nationally or locally to improve registration levels, especially among under-represented groups such as younger people and foreign nationals?</p> <p>Established under the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005, Bòrd na Gàidhlig is an executive non-departmental public body of the Scottish Government. It is the principal public body in Scotland responsible for promoting Gaelic development and providing advice to the Scottish Ministers on Gaelic issues.</p> <p>The aim of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23³ is "that Gaelic is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations". This will be achieved by focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the use of Gaelic. • Increasing the learning of Gaelic. • Promoting a positive image of Gaelic. <p>Our aim is that Gaelic is seen and heard on a daily basis across Scotland, such that it is widely</p> |

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

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

aithneachadh gu farsaing gu bheil i aig cridhe beatha na h-Alba agus na stòras nàiseanta.

Thathar a’ bruidhinn Gàidhlig air feadh na h-Alba. Tha mu 50% de luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig a’ fuireach sa Ghàidhealtachd agus sna h-Eileanan, agus càch air feadh na dùthcha. A rèir Cunntas-sluaigh 2011, bha sgilean Gàidhlig aig 87,100 daoine (mu 1.7% den t-sluagh), agus bha 57,600 dhiubh a b’ urrainn Gàidhlig a bhruidhinn. Tha iarrtas a’ sìor fhàs airson cànan is cultar na Gàidhlig agus na buannachdan foghlaim, eaconamach is sòisealta co-cheangailte riutha.

Tha Foghlam tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig (FMG) a’ leudachadh air feadh na h-Alba. Tha e a-nis ri fhaighinn ann an còrr is dàrna leth nan 32 ùghdarrasan ionadail ann an Alba. Thòisich Foghlam tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig ann an 1985 le 14 sgoilearan sa bhun-sgoil. A-nis tha còrr is 5,600 sgoilear san roinn thar foghlaim Thràth-bhliadhnaichean, Bun-sgoile is Àrd-sgoile. Gus coinneachadh ri fàs leantainneach san iarrtas bidh feum air tasgadh ann an sgoiltean agus tidsearan.

Tha an t-iarrtas airson Gàidhlig ionnsachadh follaiseach san àrdachadh mhòr de dhaoine a tha a’ gabhail ris an app/làrach-lìn ionnsachadh cànan Duolingo. Tha mu 1.5 millean neach air tòiseachadh air Gàidhlig na h-Alba ionnsachadh air an app bho thòisich e o chionn trì bliadhna. Tha cur air bhog SpeakGaelic san t-Sultain 2021 cuideachd air cur gu mòr ri goireasan do dh’inbich a tha airson a dhol an sàs sa Ghàidhlig agus an cànan ionnsachadh.

Fhuair “Suirbhidh Beachdan Sòisealta na h-Alba 2021: Beachdan Poball na h-Alba air a’ Ghàidhlig”, gu bheil, an coimeas ri 2012,

- A’ cho-chuid a tha ag ràdh gun urrainn dhaibh co-dhiù corra fhacal Gàidhlig a bhruidhinn air dùblachadh bho 15% gu 30%.
- Gu bheil a’ cho-chuid a tha ag ràdh gun tuig iad co-dhiù beagan Gàidhlig air a dhol am meud bho 25% gu 41%.

recognised as an integral part of Scottish life and a national asset.

Gaelic is spoken across Scotland. About 50% of Gaelic speakers live in the Highlands and Islands with the remainder in the rest of the country. At the 2011 Census 87,100 people in Scotland had Gaelic skills (around 1.7% of the population), of which 57,600 were Gaelic speakers. There is a growing demand for Gaelic language and culture with related educational, economic and social benefits.

Gaelic Medium Education is expanding across Scotland. It is now available in over half of Scotland’s 32 local authorities. Gaelic Medium Education began in 1985 with 14 primary pupils. There are now more than 5,600 pupils in the sector across Early Years, Primary and Secondary education. Meeting continuing growth in demand will require investment in schools and teachers.

The demand for learning Gaelic is evident in the huge uptake for the Duolingo language learning app/website. Some 1.5 million people have started learning Scottish Gaelic on the app since it launched over three years ago. The launch of SpeakGaelic in September 2021 has also greatly contributed to resources for adults who want to engage with and learn the language.

The “Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2021: Public Attitudes to Gaelic in Scotland” found that since 2012:

- The proportion who say they can speak at least the odd word of Gaelic has doubled from 15% to 30%.
- The proportion who say they can understand at least a little Gaelic has increased from 25% to 41%.



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| <p>A bharrachd air sin, tha 79% de dhaoine a' smaointinn gu bheil a' Ghàidhlig an dàrna cuid cudromach no glè chudromach do dhualchas cultarach na h-Alba.</p> <p>Tha seantans fosglaidh na sgrìobhainn co-chomhairleachaidh ag ràdh gu bheil “Riaghaltas na h-Alba fhathast làn dhealasach mu bhith a’ meudachadh com-pàirt ann an taghaidhean an dà chuid a thaobh àireamh luchd-bhòtaidh agus a’ brosnachadh dhaoine seasamh airson taghadh”.</p> <p>’S e aon dòigh air seo a choileanadh le bhith a’ cleachdadh stuthan Gàidhlig ann an sanasachd taghaidhean. Bhrosnaicheadh seo luchd-cleachdaidh agus luchd-ionnsachaidh na Gàidhlig pàirt a ghabhail sa phròiseas taghaidh. Bhiodh seo a’ toirt taic do oidhirpean gus ìrean clàraidh àrdachadh agus, mar sin, àrdachadh air an àireamh bhòtaidh.</p> <p>Bhiodh seo cuideachd a’ nochdadh amasan Achd na Gàidhlig (Alba) 2005. Tha e ag ràdh gu bheil “na gnìomhan a tha air am buileachadh air a’ Bhòrd leis an Achd seo gu bhith air an cur an gnìomh le sùil ri inbhe na Gàidhlig a dhèanamh tèarainte mar chànan oifigeil na h-Alba aig a bheil spèis co-ionnan ris a’ Bheurla”.</p> <p>Bheireadh stuthan taghaidh Gàidhlig an cois an fheadhainn sa Bheurla co-ionannachd spèis don dà chànan. Faodar argamaid a dhèanamh cuideachd gu bheil feum air cleachdadh na Gàidhlig ann an leithid de phrìomh ghnìomhachd – i.e., taghaidhean – gus a iomchaidheachd a chumail mar “cànan oifigeil na h-Alba”.</p> <p>Tha Plana Gàidhlig Riaghaltas na h-Alba² ag ràdh “airson gum bi a’ Ghàidhlig seasmhach san àm ri teachd, tha feum ann airson oidhirp còmhla” bho raon de bhuidhnean agus</p> | <p>Further, 79% of people think Gaelic is either very or fairly important to Scotland’s cultural heritage.</p> <p>The consultation document’s opening sentence states that “The Scottish Government remains fully committed to increasing participation in elections both in terms of voter turnout and encouraging people to stand for election”.</p> <p>One means of achieving this would be by using Gaelic language materials in publicising elections. This would encourage users and learners of Gaelic to participate in the electoral process. This would support efforts to increase registration levels and, thus, increase voter turnout.</p> <p>This would also reflect the aims of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005. It states that “The functions conferred on the Bòrd by this Act are to be exercised with a view to securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language”.</p> <p>Including Gaelic language election materials alongside those in English would provide equal respect to the two languages. It can also be argued that the use of Gaelic in such a key activity-i.e., elections-is necessary in order to maintain its relevance as “an official language of Scotland”.</p> <p>Scottish Government’s Gaelic Language Plan⁴ states that “for Gaelic to have a sustainable future, there needs to be a concerted effort” on</p> |
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² <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2022/10/scottish-governments-gaelic-language-plan-2022-2027/documents/scottish-governments-gaelic-language-plan-2022-2027/scottish-governments-gaelic-language-plan-2022-2027/govscot%3Adocument/scottish-governments-gaelic-language-plan-2022-2027.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2022/10/scottish-governments-gaelic-language-plan-2022-2027/documents/scottish-governments-gaelic-language-plan-2022-2027/scottish-governments-gaelic-language-plan-2022-2027/govscot%3Adocument/scottish-governments-gaelic-language-plan-2022-2027.pdf>



luchd-labhairt fa-leth na Gàidhlig – a’ gabhail a-steach “riaghaltas” – gus:

- Cleachdadh na Gàidhlig a chomasachadh ann an raon de shuidheachaidhean sòisealta, foirmeil agus obrach.
- Meudaich spèis agus faicsinneachd, cluinntinn agus aithne don Ghàidhlig.

Mar sin, chuidicheadh leudachadh cleachdadh na Gàidhlig gu stuthan taghaidh gus poileasaidhean Riaghaltas na h-Alba fhèin airson a’ chànain a thoirt gu buil. Le bhith ag àrdachadh cleachdadh na Gàidhlig, chuidicheadh e cuideachd ri bhith a’ coileanadh amasan Plana Cànain Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig.

Dh’fhaodadh seo a bhith a’ gabhail a-steach cleachdadh na Gàidhlig air pàipearan baileat taghaidh ann an taghaidhean Pàrlamaid na h-Alba agus ùghdarrasan ionadail. Tha ro-shampall ann airson seo. Tha a’ Chuimris air a cleachdadh ann an taghaidhean ùghdarrasan ionadail agus comhairle coimhearsnachd sa Chuimrigh, a’ gabhail a-steach pàipearan baileat agus soidhnichean stèiseanan bhòtaidh.

Chaidh seo a leudachadh ann an 2017 leis a’ cheann air na pàipearan baileat a’ toirt a-steach eadar-theangachadh Cuimris. Roimhe sin bha stiùireadh bhòtaidh anns an dà chànan anns na pàipearan baileat ach cha robh mion-fhiosrachadh mun taghadh aig mullach a’ bhaileat sgrìobhte ach sa Bheurla.

Ann an taghaidhean Seanadh na Cuimrigh tha stiùireadh ann an Cuimris agus Beurla aig gach cuid ciad seachad air a’ phost agus bhòtaichean bhall a bharrachd, agus tha ainmean nam pàrtaidhean ann an Cuimris anns a’ phàipear baileat bhall a bharrachd.

Tha sinn cuideachd a’ toirt fa-near gu bheil Coimisean an Taghaidh a’ toirt seachad seirbheis dà-chànanach - i.e., an dà chuid sa Bheurla agus sa Chuimris. Tha sin a’ gabhail a-steach a’ brosnachadh cleachdadh sheirbheisean taghaidh sa Chuimris agus a’ brosnachadh taghaidhean tro Chuimris anns na meadhanan. An coimeas ri sin, chan eil Coimisean an Taghaidh ann an Alba a’ toirt seachad seirbheisean sam bith sa Ghàidhlig.

the part of a range of bodies and individual Gaelic speakers-including “government”-to:

- Enable the use of Gaelic in a range of social, formal, and work settings.
- Expand the respect for, and visibility, audibility, and recognition of Gaelic.

Thus, extending the use of Gaelic to election materials would help to achieve Scottish Government’s own policies for the language. By increasing the use of Gaelic, it would also contribute to achieving the aims of the National Gaelic Language Plan.

This could include the use of Gaelic on election ballot papers in Scottish Parliament and local authority elections. There is a precedent for this. The Welsh language is used in local authority and community council elections in Wales, including on ballot papers and polling station signage.

This was extended in 2017 with the heading on the ballot papers including a Welsh translation. Previously ballot papers included voting instructions in both languages but details of the election at the top of the ballot were only written in English.

In Welsh Assembly elections both first past the post and additional member votes have instructions in Welsh and English, while the additional member ballot paper also includes the parties’ names in Welsh.

We also note that the Electoral Commission provides a bilingual service-i.e., both in English and Welsh. That includes promoting the use of electoral services in Welsh and promoting elections through Welsh in the media. In contrast, the Electoral Commission in Scotland provides no services in Gaelic.



Nas fharsainghe, **bu chòir gum biodh barrachd cleachdaidh den chànan le luchd-cleachdaidh na Gàidhlig a' cur ri an sunnd fa leth.** Bidh cànan agus cultar a' cruthachadh fèin-mhiadh, a' brosnachadh fèin-mhisneachd, a' mìneachadh fèin-aithne agus a' leasachadh maitheas na beatha. Bidh seo a' meudachadh sunnd luchd-cleachdaidh, luchd-ionnsachaidh agus luchd-taice – aig a bheil moit mhòr anns a' chànan agus a cultar. Tha i a' cur ri, ann an dòigh dheimhinneach, na bhios na daoine seo a' smaointinn agus a' faireachdainn mu dheidhinn am beatha.

Geàrr-iomradh:

Faodaidh cleachdadh na Gàidhlig ann an stuthan taghaidh - a' gabhail a-steach pàipearan baileat - cur ri àrdachadh ìrean clàraidh agus mar sin àrdachadh air an àireamh bhòtaidh.

'S e amas Achd na Gàidhlig (Alba) 2005 gus "inbhe na Gàidhlig a dhèanamh tèarainte mar chànan oifigeil na h-Alba aig a bheil spèis co-ionann ris a' Bheurla". Tha taghaidhean nam pàirt bhunaiteach de bheatha nàiseanta. Mar sin, is iad sin feadhainn far am bu chòir spèis cho-ionann a thoirt don Ghàidhlig agus don Bheurla. Cuideachd, chuireadh barrachd feum den chànan le luchd-cleachdaidh na Gàidhlig ri sunnd nan daoine sin.

Tha ro-shampall ann an àiteachan eile san RA. Bithear a' cleachdadh na Cuimris ann am follaiseachd airson taghaidhean agus air na pàipearan baileat airson taghaidhean Seanadh na Cuimrigh. Bheireadh toirt a-steach na h-aon cheumannan ann an Alba don Ghàidhlig inbhe cho-ionann ris a' Bheurla agus a' Chuimris.

More widely, **greater use of the language by Gaelic users should be viewed as contributing towards their individual wellbeing.** Language and culture create self-esteem, nurture self-confidence, define identity and improve quality of life. This increases wellbeing for users, learners, and supporters - who have great pride in the language and culture. It contributes positively to what these people think and feel about their lives.

Summary:

Using the Gaelic language in election materials - including ballot papers - can contribute to increased registration levels and thus increase voter turnout.

The aim of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 is that "Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language". Elections are a fundamental part of national life. As such, they are ones where Gaelic and the English language should be given equal respect. In addition, greater use of the language by Gaelic users would contribute towards these individuals' wellbeing.

There is a precedent elsewhere in the UK. The Welsh language is used in publicity for elections and on the ballot papers for Welsh Assembly elections. Introducing the same measures in Scotland for Gaelic would give it equal status to both English and Welsh.

