

<p>Cis comhairle air dàrna dachaighean agus dachaighean falamh / Ìrean neo-dachaigheil: co-chomhairle</p> <p>Freagairt bho Bhòrd na Gàidhlig</p> <p>26 Ògmhios 2023</p>	<p>Council tax on second and empty homes / Non-domestic rates: consultation</p> <p>Response from Bòrd na Gàidhlig</p> <p>26 June 2022</p>
<p>23. Feuchaibh an innis sibh dhuinn mar a sibh den beachd mar a dh'fhaodadh na h-atharraichean a chaidh a chomharrachadh buaidh a thoirt air Coimhearsnachdan Eileanach.</p> <p>Tha sinn a' toirt taic do amas Riaghaltas na h-Alba - mar a chaidh a ràdh sa phàipear co-chomhairleachaidh - "gum bu chòir dachaigh shàbhailte, àrd-inbhe a bhith aig a h-uile duine aig prìs reusanta agus a choinnicheas ri am feumalachdan san àite a tha iad ag iarraidh a bhith".</p> <p>Chun na h-ìre gun dèanadh atharrachaidhean air siostam cìs na comhairle agus stairsnich reataichean neo-dachaigheil airson àiteachan-fuirich fèin-fhrithéalaidh barrachd thaighean rim faighinn airson luchd-còmhnaidh fad na bliadhna agus an fheadhainn aig aois obrach gu sònraichte, meudaichidh seo comasachd choimhearsnachdan.</p> <p>Cuidichidh sin le bhith cumail/àrdachadh àireamh luchd-labhairt/luchd-cleachdaidh na Gàidhlig ann an coimhearsnachdan eileanach agus mar sin a' cur ri amas a' Phlana Ghàidhlig Nàiseanta gum bi "Gàidhlig air a cleachdadh nas trice, le barrachd dhaoine agus ann an raon nas fharsainghe de shuidheachaidhean"¹.</p> <p>Ann an Cunntas 2011 tha còrr air cairteal (26%) den fheadhainn le sgilean Gàidhlig a' fuireach air eilean Albannach. Tha sin a' gabhail a-steach co-chruinnean ann an eileanan sònraichte. Bha beagan sgilean Gàidhlig aig</p>	<p>23. Please tell us how you think the changes identified might affect Island Communities.</p> <p>We support Scottish Government's aim-as stated in the consultation paper-that "everyone should have a safe, high-quality home that is affordable and meets their needs in the place they want to be".</p> <p>To the extent that changes to the council tax system and non-domestic rates thresholds for self-catering accommodation would make more housing available for all year-round residents and those of working age in particular then this will increase the viability of communities.</p> <p>That will help retain/increase the number of Gaelic speakers/users in island communities and thus contribute to the National Gaelic Plan's aim that that "Gaelic is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations"⁸.</p> <p>In the 2011 Census more than one quarter (26%) of those with Gaelic skills live on a Scottish island. That includes concentrations in particular islands. Some 61% of those aged 3 or above in</p>

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

⁸ <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/BnG-NGLP-18-23.pdf>

mu 61% de dhaoine aois 3 no nas sine anns na h-Eileanan Siar. Tha sin an coimeas ri dìreach 1.7% airson sluagh na h-Alba air fad.

Ann an cuid de na h-eileanan as iomallaiche bha na h-àireamhan mòran na b' àirde fiù 's. Mar eisimpleir, 82% ann an Èirisgeigh agus mu 80% ann an Sgalpaigh. Bha na h-àireamhan cuideachd an ìre mhath àrd ann am pàirtean eile de na h-eileanan. Mar eisimpleir, mu 45% ann an Tiriodh agus 37% san Eilean Sgitheanach.

Tha e coltach gum bi a' bhuidh air a' Ghàidhlig le bhith ag atharrachadh an t-solair taigheadais ann an coimhearsnachdan eileanach le àireamhan coimeasach àrd de luchd-cleachdaidh na Gàidhlig gu math eadar-dhealaichte bhon bhuidh ann an:

- Coimhearsnachdan air tìr-mòr le mòran nas lugha de luchd-cleachdaidh na Gàidhlig.
- Eileanan eile far nach eil Gàidhlig ga cleachdadh idir no air a cleachdadh glè bheag.

Mar sin, leis gu bheil caochladh mòr anns an ìre de chleachdadh na Gàidhlig an-dràsta bidh a' bhuidh eadar-dhealaichte eadar diofar eileanan.

Chan eil iomradh sam bith air a' Ghàidhlig anns a' Mheasadh Buaidh Pàirteach a chaidh a ghabhail os làimh. Tha sin a dh'aindeoin gu bheil e na riatanas ann an Stiùireadh ICIA Riaghaltas na h-Alba².

Tha seo ag ràdh: “Bu chòir do ICIA cuideachd beachdachadh air a' bhuidh a dh'fhaodadh a bhith aig poileasaidh, ro-innleachd no seirbheisean air na cànanan agus an dualchas cultarail a bhuineas don choimhearsnachd eileanach sin.” agus “Am b' urrainn dhuibh a dhèanamh soilleir san ICIA agaibh dè a' bhuidh a th' aig a' Ghàidhlig air a' Ghàidhlig ann an

Eilean Siar (Outer Hebrides) had some skills in Gaelic. That compares to just 1.7% for the Scottish population.

In some of the most remote islands the figures even much higher. For example, 82% in Eriskay and around 80% in Scalpay. The figures were also relatively high in some other islands. For example, around 45% in Tìre and 37% in the Isle of Skye.

The impact on the Gaelic language of changing the supply of housing in island communities with relatively high numbers of Gaelic users is likely to be significantly different from the impact in both:

- Mainland communities with much fewer Gaelic users.
- Other islands where there is very little or no use of Gaelic at all.

Thus, as there is significant variation in the current extent of use of Gaelic the impact will vary between different islands.

There is no reference to the Gaelic language in the Partial Impact Assessment that has been undertaken. That is despite it being a requirement of Scottish Government's ICIA Guidance⁹.

This states: “An ICIA should also consider what impact the policy, strategy or services may have on the languages and the cultural heritage relevant to that island community” and “could you make clear in your ICIA what the impact is on the Gaelic language in island communities, if any,

² <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2022/07/island-communities-impact-assessments-guidance-toolkit-2/documents/island-communities-impact-assessments-guidance-toolkit/island-communities-impact-assessments-guidance-toolkit/govscot%3Adocument/island-communities-impact-assessments-guidance-toolkit.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2022/07/island-communities-impact-assessments-guidance-toolkit-2/documents/island-communities-impact-assessments-guidance-toolkit/island-communities-impact-assessments-guidance-toolkit/govscot%3Adocument/island-communities-impact-assessments-guidance-toolkit.pdf>



<p>coimhearsnachdan eileanach, ma tha gin ann, an taca ri sgìrean eile (a’ gabhail a-steach coimhearsnachdan eileanach eile)”.</p>	<p>compared to other areas (including other island communities)”.</p>
<p>Tha an riatanas seo cuideachd air a ghabhail a-steach ann am Plana Nàiseanta nan Eilean aig Riaghaltas na h-Alba³. Tha aon de na h-Amasan Ro-innleachdail aige ag ràdh “Airson taigheadas a leasachadh nì sinn... cinnteach gun tèid beachdachadh air a’ bhuidh a bhios aig poileasaidhean taigheadais air coimhearsnachdan far a bheil Gàidhlig air a bruidhinn nuair a thathar a’ cruthachadh nam poileasaidhean sin”.</p>	<p>This requirement is also included in Scottish Government’s National Islands Plan¹⁰. One of its Strategic Objectives states that “To improve housing we will... Ensure that the impact on Gaelic speaking communities is considered as housing policies are developed”.</p>
<p>Tha fear eile de na h-Amasan Ro-innleachdail aige ag ràdh “Gus dèiligeadh ri crìonadh sluaigh agus dèanamh cinnteach gum bi ìomhaigh sluaigh fallain, cothromach againn... Nì sinn cinnteach gu bheil poileasaidhean ag amas air luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig a ghlèidheadh ann an coimhearsnachd Gàidhlig eileanach no an tàladh ann”.</p>	<p>Another of its Strategic Objectives states that “To address population decline and ensure a healthy, balanced population profile we will... Ensure that policies aim to retain and attract Gaelic speakers to live and work in Gaelic speaking island communities”.</p>
<p>Nas fharsainghe tha Plana Nàiseanta nan Eilean cuideachd a’ toirt iomradh air feum air:</p>	<p>More widely the National Islands Plan also refers to a need to:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil riaghladh màil geàrr-ùine a’ toirt aire do shuidheachadh sònraichte choimhearsnachdan eileanach agus a’ dèanamh ullachadh sònraichte air an son far a bheil feum air”; agus • “Leasachadh cothroman air dachaighean do dhaoine a tha airson tuineachadh, no tilleadh, gu coimhearsnachdan nan eilean”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Ensure that the regulation of short-term lets takes account of the unique circumstances of island communities and make special provision for them where required”; and • “Improve access to homes for people looking to settle in, or return to, island communities”.
<p>Mar sin, bu chòir a’ bhuidh air a’ Ghàidhlig ann an coimhearsnachdan eileanach a bhith air a ghabhail a-steach ann an leasachadh an ICIA às dèidh sin.</p>	<p>Therefore, the impact on the Gaelic language in island communities should be included in the subsequent development of the ICIA.</p>
<p>Bidh feum aig seo air co-chomhairle le buidhnean co-cheangailte leis a’ Ghàidhlig, a’ gabhail a-steach Bòrd na Gàidhlig agus fheadhainn eile le ùidh sa chànan. Bu chòir</p>	<p>This will require consultation with Gaelic-related organisations, including Bòrd na Gàidhlig and others with an interest in the language. That</p>

³ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2019/12/national-plan-scotlands-islands/documents/national-islands-plan-plana-naiseanta-nan-eilean/national-islands-plan-plana-naiseanta-nan-eilean/govscot%3Adocument/plana-naiseanta-nan-eilean.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2019/12/national-plan-scotlands-islands/documents/national-islands-plan-plana-naiseanta-nan-eilean/national-islands-plan-plana-naiseanta-nan-eilean/govscot%3Adocument/national-islands-plan-plana-naiseanta-nan-eilean.pdf>



dha sin faighneachd gu sònraichte do cho-chomhairlichean dè a' bhuidhean a dh'fhaodadh a bhith aig na h-atharrachaidhean a thathar a' moladh air a' Ghàidhlig.

Bidh e cuideachd feumach air analais air na dàta air an àireimh sa cheud de luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig ann an coimhearsnachdan eileanach. Tha am fiosrachadh seo ri fhaighinn bho Chunntas-sluaigh 2011 agus bidh e ri fhaighinn bho Chunntas-sluaigh 2022 an ceann ùine.

25. A bheil dad sam bith eile a tha thu airson innse dhuinn a thaobh a' cho-chomhairle seo?

Stèidhichte fo Achd na Gàidhlig (Alba) 2005, tha Bòrd na Gàidhlig na bhuidheann phoblach neo-roinneil aig Riaghaltas na h-Alba. Is e a' phrìomh bhuidheann phoblach ann an Alba a tha an urra ri leasachadh na Gàidhlig a chur air adhart agus comhairle a thoirt do Mhinistearan na h-Alba air cùisean Gàidhlig.

'S e amas a' Phlana Cànan Nàiseanta Ghàidhlig 2018-23 gun tèid "a' Ghàidhlig a chleachdadh nas trice, le barrachd dhaoine agus ann an raon nas fharsaing de shuidheachaidhean". Bheirear seo gu buil le bhith a' cuimseachadh air:

- Cur am meud cleachdadh na Gàidhlig.
- Cur am meud ionnsachadh na Gàidhlig.
- Cur air adhart deagh ìomhaigh den Ghàidhlig.

Bheirear an cleachdadh a bharrachd seo gu bith, gu ìre, le bhith a' toirt gu buil na buannachdan eaconamach a bhios a' Ghàidhlig a' toirt do dh'Alba. 'S e amas a' Bhùird gum faicear is gun cluinnear a' Ghàidhlig gu làitheil air feadh na h-Alba, air dhòigh 's gun tèid aithneachadh gu farsaing gu bheil i aig cridhe beatha na h-Alba agus na stòras nàiseanta.

Tha Gàidhlig ga bruidhinn air feadh na h-Alba. Tha mu 50% de luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig a' fuireach air a' Ghàidhealtachd agus sna h-Eileanan, agus an càch air feadh na dùthcha. Aig Cunntas-sluaigh 2011, bha comas air choreigin sa Ghàidhlig aig 87,100 neach ann an Alba (mu 1.7% den t-sluaigh), agus bha 57,600 dhiubh sin nan

should specifically ask consultees what they see as the proposed changes' potential impact on the Gaelic language.

It will also require analysis of data on the percentage of Gaelic speakers in island communities. This information is available from the 2011 Census and will be available from the 2022 Census in due course.

25. Is there anything else you would like to tell us in relation to this consultation?

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.

The aim of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23 is "that Gaelic is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations". This will be achieved by focusing on:

- Increasing the use of Gaelic.
- Increasing the learning of Gaelic.
- Promoting a positive image of Gaelic.

This greater use of the language will, in part, be achieved through fully realising the social and economic benefits that Gaelic brings to Scotland. Our aim is that Gaelic is seen and heard on a daily basis across Scotland, such that it is widely recognised as an integral part of Scottish life and a national asset.

Gaelic is spoken across Scotland. Around 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



luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig. Tha iarrtas a’ fàs airson cànan is cultar na Gàidhlig, le buannachdan foghlaim, eaconamach is sòisealta co-cheangailte riutha.

Tha Foghlam tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig ga leudachadh air feadh na dùthcha. Tha e a-nis ri fhaighinn ann an còrr is an dàrna leth de na 32 Ùghdarrasan Ionadail ann an Alba. Thòisich Foghlam tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig ann an 1985 le 14 sgoilearan bun-sgoile. Tha a-nis còrr is 5,600 sgoilearan san roinn thar foghlam Tràth-bhliadhnaichean, Bun-sgoil agus Àrd-sgoil. Gus coinneachadh ri fàs leantainneach san iarrtas, bidh feum ann air tasgadh ann an sgoiltean agus tidsearan.

Tha an t-iarrtas airson Gàidhlig ionnsachadh follaiseach anns an àrdachadh anabarrach mòr a tha a’ gabhail ris an app/làrach-lìn ionnsachadh cànan Duolingo. Tha mu 1.5 millean neach air tòiseachadh ag ionnsachadh na Gàidhlig air an app bho thòisich an cùrsa o chionn trì bliadhna. Tha a’ mhòr-chuid (71%) bho thaobh a-muigh na RA, le 36% anns na Stàitean Aonaichte a-mhàin.

Tha cur air bhog SpeakGaelic san Dàmhair 2021 air chur gu mòr ri goireasan do dh’inbich a tha airson a dhol an sàs sa chànan agus a h-ionnsachadh. Tha timcheall air 400,000 neach-ionnsachaidh air a chleachdadh bho chaidh a chur air bhog.

Fhuair “Suirbhidh Beachdan Sòisealta na h-Alba 2021: Beachdan a’ Phobail a thaobh na Gàidhlig ann an Alba”⁴ gu bheil, bho 2012:

- A’ cho-chuid a tha ag ràdh gur urrainn dhaibh co-dhiù corra fhacal Gàidhlig a bhruidhinn air dùblachadh bho 15% gu 30%.
- A’ cho-chuid a tha ag ràdh gur urrainn dhaibh co-dhiù beagan Gàidhlig a thuigsinn air dhol an-àirde bho 25% gu 41%.

A bharrachd air sin, tha 79% de dhaoine den bheachd gu bheil a’ Ghàidhlig glè chudromach no meadhanach cudromach do dhualchas cultarail na h-Alba.

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 of the Duolingo language learning app/website. Some 1.5 million people have started learning Gaelic on the app since the course launched over three years ago. The majority (71%) are from outside the UK, with 36% in the United States alone.

The launch of SpeakGaelic in October 2021 has also greatly contributed to resources for adults who want to engage with and learn the language. It has seen around 400,000 learners since its launch.

The “Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2021: Public Attitudes to Gaelic in Scotland”¹¹ 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%.

Further, 79% of people think Gaelic is either very or fairly important to Scotland’s cultural heritage.

⁴ <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/03.SSA-2021-Public-attitudes-to-Gaelic-in-Scotland-Main-report.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/03.SSA-2021-Public-attitudes-to-Gaelic-in-Scotland-Main-report.pdf>



Lorg suirbhidh de dhaoine òga (iadsan eadar 11 agus 26 bliadhna a dh'aois)⁵ gun robh trian (33%) den luchd-fhreagairt ag ràdh gu robh iad ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig ann an dòigh air choreigin. Thuir tuilleadh air leth (59%) den luchd-fhreagairt aig *nach robh a'* Gàidhlig gun robh ùidh aca ann a bhith ag ionnsachadh a' chànain. Cuideachd, 72% den luchd-fhreagairt gu lèir a' meas cultar is dualchas na Gàidhlig mar rud luachmhor no fìor-luachmhor.

Tha Bòrd na Gàidhlig a' cur beachd a-steach dhan chomhairle seo a chionn 's gu bheil seasmhachd na Gàidhlig an crochadh air seasmhachd nan coimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig: gu sònraichte an fheadhainn ann an sgìrean eileanach agus dùthchail air a' Ghàidhealtachd is anns na h-Eileanan.

Tha grunn chùisean sòiseo-eaconamach a' toirt buaidh air ion-obrachadh choimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig agus mar sin an cànan. Tha Bòrd na Gàidhlig ag obair gus dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil ag aithneachadh buaidh nan cùisean sin agus a' dèiligeadh riutha. 'S e taigheadas aon de na prìomh chùisean a tha a' toirt buaidh air ion-obrachadh choimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig - gu sònraichte a chosgais agus na tha ri fhaighinn. Tha seo deatamach ann a bhith a' glèidheadh agus a' tàladh slugh - luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig nam measg.

Tha feum aig coimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig seasmhach is soirbheachail air àireamhan gu leòr de dhaoine airson fuireach ann fad na bliadhna agus ceangal aca ris an sgìre agus ri cultar is cànan an àite. Tha ceanglaichean làidir aig luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig - agus eile - ris an àite far an do rugadh agus thogadh iad agus feumar aithneachadh gu bheil feum air na ceanglaichean sin a ghlèidheadh. Tha feum aca air àiteachan-fuirich agus tha feum aca air taigheadas freagarrach airson seo a dhèanamh - ri taobh seirbheisean a tha rim faighinn gu h-ionadail - agus cha tèid na coimhearsnachdan sin a chumail suas mura h-urrainn do dhaoine gu leòr fuireach ann làn-ùine.

A survey of young people (those aged between 11 and 26 years)¹² found that one third (33%) of respondents stated that were learning Gaelic in some form. More than half (59%) of the respondents who could *not* speak Gaelic stated that they were interested in learning the language. Also, 72% of all respondents rated Gaelic culture and heritage as quite or very valuable.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig are responding to this consultation because *the viability of the Gaelic language rests on viable Gaelic-speaking communities: particularly those in island and rural areas in the Highlands and Islands.*

A number of socio-economic issues impact the viability of Gaelic communities and thus the language. Bòrd na Gàidhlig are working to ensure the impact of such issues are recognised and addressed. One of the *critical issues affecting viability* of Gaelic speaking communities is housing - specifically its cost and availability. This is vital in retaining and attracting population - including Gaelic speakers.

Sustainable and thriving Gaelic communities require sufficient numbers of people to live there all year round and have a connection to the region and the culture and language of the place. Gaelic speakers - and others - have strong ties to the place where they were born and raised and it must be recognised that there is a need to maintain these ties. They need places to live and they need suitable housing to do this - along with locally available services - and these communities will not be sustained unless sufficient people can live there full time.

⁵ <https://youngscot.net/yobservatory/a-bhith-an-sas-le-ghaidhlig-air-loidhne-engaging-with-gaelic-online>

¹² <https://youngscot.net/yobservatory/a-bhith-an-sas-le-ghaidhlig-air-loidhne-engaging-with-gaelic-online>



<p>Is e an toradh a thathar ag iarraidh bho atharrachaidhean ann am poileasaidh taigheadais solar gu leòr de thaigheadas aig prìs reusanta. Leigidh seo le:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daoine a’ fàs suas ann an coimhearsnachd gus leantainn orra a’ fuireach ann. • Cuid eile – agus gu sònraichte an fheadhainn aig aois obrach – a’ gluasad an sin gus cothroman cosnaidh a ghabhail (luchd-tilleadh nam measg). <p>Tha seo riatanach gus coimhearsnachdan a chumail le eaconamaidhean ion-obrachail agus pròifilean aois.</p> <p>Tha dùbhlain mhòra sòiseo-eaconamach eile mu choinneamh mòran sgìrean far a bheil co-chuid àrd de luchd-cleachdaidh na Gàidhlig mar-thà, a bharrachd air taigheadas.</p> <p><i>Cosgais bith-beò a tha gu math àrd.</i> Tha rannsachadh air sealltainn gum feum daoine ann an sgìrean dùthchail iomallach na h-Alba mar as trice eadar an deiceamh agus an treas cuid a bharrachd a chaitheamh air cosgaisean dachaigh airson ìre bith-beò, aig an ìre as ìsle ris am faodar gabhail, na ann am pàirtean bailteil den RA⁶. Tha sin na cho-theacs air àrdachadh ann am prìsean thaighean ann an sgìrean dùthchail agus eileanach.</p> <p><i>Gluasadan sluagh-thomhais a bheir droch bhuaidh.</i> Mar eisimpleir, tha staitistigean bho Chlàran Nàiseanta na h-Alba a’ sealltainn crìonadh ann an àireamh-sluaigh gach cuid anns na Hearadh agus ann an Uibhist, agus sluagh a tha sean an coimeas ri sgìrean eile agus a tha a’ fàs sean aig reat nas luaithe na chithear air a’ Ghàidhealtachd is na h-Eileanan agus ann an Alba air fad.</p> <p><i>Tuarastal ìosal.</i> Tha Suirbhidh Bhliadhna 2022 air Uairean is Tuarastail a’ sealltainn gu bheil an tuarastal cuibheasach seachdaineach làn-ùine anns na h-Eileanan Siar aig 88% den ìre cuibheasach airson na h-Alba.</p>	<p>The desired outcome from housing policy changes is a sufficient supply of affordable housing. This will allow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People growing up in a community to continue to live there. • Others - and particularly those of working age - to move there to take up employment opportunities (including returners). <p>This is required to sustain communities with viable economies and age profiles.</p> <p>Many areas with high proportions of Gaelic users already face other significant socio-economic challenges in addition to housing.</p> <p><i>Relatively high cost of living.</i> Research has shown that a minimum acceptable standard of living in remote rural Scotland typically requires between a tenth and a third more household spending than in urban parts of the UK¹³. That is a context of rising house prices in rural and island areas.</p> <p><i>Negative population trends.</i> For example, statistics from the National Records of Scotland show falling populations in both Harris and Uist; and ones that are relatively old and aging at a faster rate than in the Highlands and Islands and Scotland.</p> <p><i>Low wages.</i> The 2022 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings shows the average full-time weekly wage in Eilean Siar as 88% of the Scottish average.</p>
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⁶ <https://www.hie.co.uk/media/6441/aplusminimumplusincomeplusstandardplusforplusremotepusruralplusscotlandplus-plusapuspolicyplusupdateplus2016.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.hie.co.uk/media/6441/aplusminimumplusincomeplusstandardplusforplusremotepusruralplusscotlandplus-plusapuspolicyplusupdateplus2016.pdf>



Ach, sa mheadhan-ùine thathar an dùil gum bi barrachd chothroman cosnaidh air a' Ghàidhealtachd is na h-Eileanan thar grunn roinnean, a' gabhail a-steach:

- Lùth ath-nuadhachail
- Eaconamaidh na mara, a' gabhail a-steach tuathanachas uisge.
- Leudachadh ann an gnìomhan a tha riatanach airson gluasad gu net-neoni.
- Obraichean ùra agus iarrtas ùr airson luchd-obrach riatanach ann an seirbheisean èiginn, slàinte is cùram sòisealta, agus foghlam.
- Pròiseactan Cùmhnant Fàs nan Eilean.

Ma ghabhas na dreuchdan sin a lìonadh le daoine leis na sgilean agus buadhan a tha a dhìth, neartaichidh seo coimhearsnachdan dùthchail agus eileanach - a' gabhail a-steach an fheadhainn aig a bheil ìre àrd de luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig an-dràsta - agus mar sin a' toirt taic do dh'ion-obrachadh a' chànain.

Ach, thathas a' sìor aithneachadh cosgais agus ruigsinneachd taigheadais mar bhacadh air na dreuchdan sin a lìonadh. Ma chumas sin a' dol cha bhith coimhearsnachdan a' faighinn buannachd às na cothroman cudromach, a' fàgail nach bi iad cho ion-obrachail thar ùine. Tha ceangal dìreach eadar taigheadas agus beairteas eaconamach choimhearsnachdan.

Ma tha/nuair a dh'fheumas luchd-cleachdaidh na Gàidhlig an coimhearsnachd fhàgail airson faighinn gu taigheadas agus cosnadh ann an àiteachan eile faodaidh dà bhuaidh a bhith ann. An toiseach, lùghdachadh san àireimh de luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig anns an sgìre air a bheil buaidh.

San dàrna àite, faodaidh teaghlaichean air a bheil buaidh gluasad gu sgìre far nach eil a' Ghàidhlig air a cleachdadh mòran agus thar ùine, is dòcha nach bi iad a' cleachdadh a' chànain gu cunbhalach tuilleadh – no dh'fhaodadh iad a call gu tur.

Is e an toradh a tha ann lùghdachadh ann an cleachdadh na Gàidhlig san fharsaingeachd. Tha sin a' dol an aghaidh amas a' Phlana Cànain Nàiseanta Ghàidhlig gun tèid an cànan a chleachdadh na bu trice, le barrachd dhaoine.

However, in the medium term there are expected to be increasing employment opportunities in the Highlands and Islands across a number of sectors, including:

- Renewable energy.
- Marine economy, including aquaculture.
- Expansion in activities required for the transition to net-zero.
- New jobs and replacement demand for essential workers in emergency services, health and social care, and education.
- Islands Growth Deal projects.

If these positions can be filled by people with the required skills and attributes then this will strengthen rural and island communities - including those with a currently high level of Gaelic speakers, thus supporting the viability of the language.

However, the cost and availability of housing is increasingly recognised as a barrier to filling these positions. If that continues then communities will not benefit from the significant opportunities, making them less viable over time. There is a direct link between housing and communities' economic prosperity.

If/when Gaelic users have to leave their community to access housing and employment elsewhere this can have two impacts. First, a reduction in the number of Gaelic speakers in the affected area.

Second, affected households may move to an area where Gaelic is much less used, and over time, they may no longer regularly use the language - or may lose it altogether.

The result is a reduction in the use of Gaelic. That runs counter to the National Gaelic Language Plan's aim that the language is used more often, by more people.



<p>Aig an àm seo chan eil solar taigheadais a’ frithealadh feumalachdan luchd-obrach, luchd-fastaidh agus, nas fharsainghe, leasachadh na Gàidhlig.</p> <p>Dh’aidich aithisg o chionn ghoirid⁷ na dùbhlain a tha ann air sgàth ’s dì-dhaoineachadh Uibhist. Lorg an rannsachadh gun robh a’ choimhearsnachd a’ daingneachadh gur e taigheadas am prìomh chùis a tha ag adhbharachadh crìonadh sluaigh, a’ gabhail a-steach na tha ri fhaighinn, meud agus seòrsa thaighean. Chan e an duilgheadas as cudromaiche dìth obraichean. An àite sin, is e taigheadas freagarrach a tha ri fhaighinn.</p> <p>’S e dragh mhòr a th’ ann an seo leis gu bheil Uibhist na h-àite mhòr airson na Gàidhlig. Lorg Cunntas-sluaigh 2011 gu bheil beagan sgilean Gàidhlig aig còrr air dà thrian (69%) de mhuinntir Uibhist a tha aois 3 bliadhna agus nas sine.</p> <p>Tha an aithisg cuideachd a’ toirt iomradh air cho cudromach sa tha cànan is cultar na Gàidhlig don choimhearsnachd ionadail agus gu bheil a’ choimhearsnachd agus luchd-ùidh gu mòr airson dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil a’ Ghàidhlig aig cridhe na ro-innleachd ath-shluaigh.</p>	<p>At present housing provision is not serving the needs of potential employees, employers and, more widely, the development of the Gaelic language.</p> <p>A recent report¹⁴ acknowledged the depopulation challenges facing Uist. The research found that the community stressed that housing is the key issue that is causing depopulation, including the availability, size, and type of houses. The critical issue is not a lack of jobs. Rather, it is the availability of suitable housing.</p> <p>This is of significant concern as Uist is a major Gaelic heartland. The 2011 Census found that more than two thirds (69%) of Uist residents aged 3 years plus have some Gaelic skills.</p> <p>The report also refers to the importance of Gaelic language and culture to the local community and that the community and stakeholders are keen to ensure Gaelic is at the heart of the repopulation strategy.</p>
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⁷ https://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/media/21105/uist_repopulation_action_zone_report_final.pdf

¹⁴ https://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/media/21105/uist_repopulation_action_zone_report_final.pdf

