

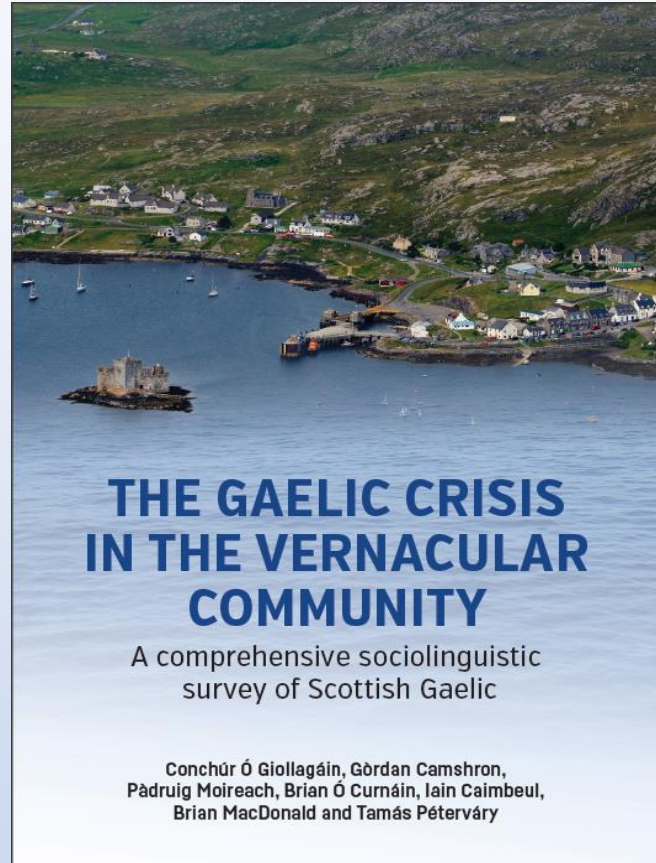
Language Planning for Minority Vernacular Communities: The Gaelic Perspective on Designated Socio-geographic Status for Minority Languages

Lurraldea eta Hizkuntza, Tír na
mBascach

Prof. Conchúr Ó Giollagáin
UHI Language Sciences Institute

23 January 2021

SOILLSE



University of the
Highlands and Islands
Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd
agus nan Eilean

Language Policy Phases 1922 - 2021

Traditional Revivalism

- 1922 National Regeneration, Post-colonial cultural + educational agenda
- **1926 Gaeltacht Commission** Report → Inter-departmental Gaeltacht Committee → Office of the Gaeltacht and Congested Districts 1951 → **Dept. of Gaeltacht 1956**

Aspirational Bilingualism

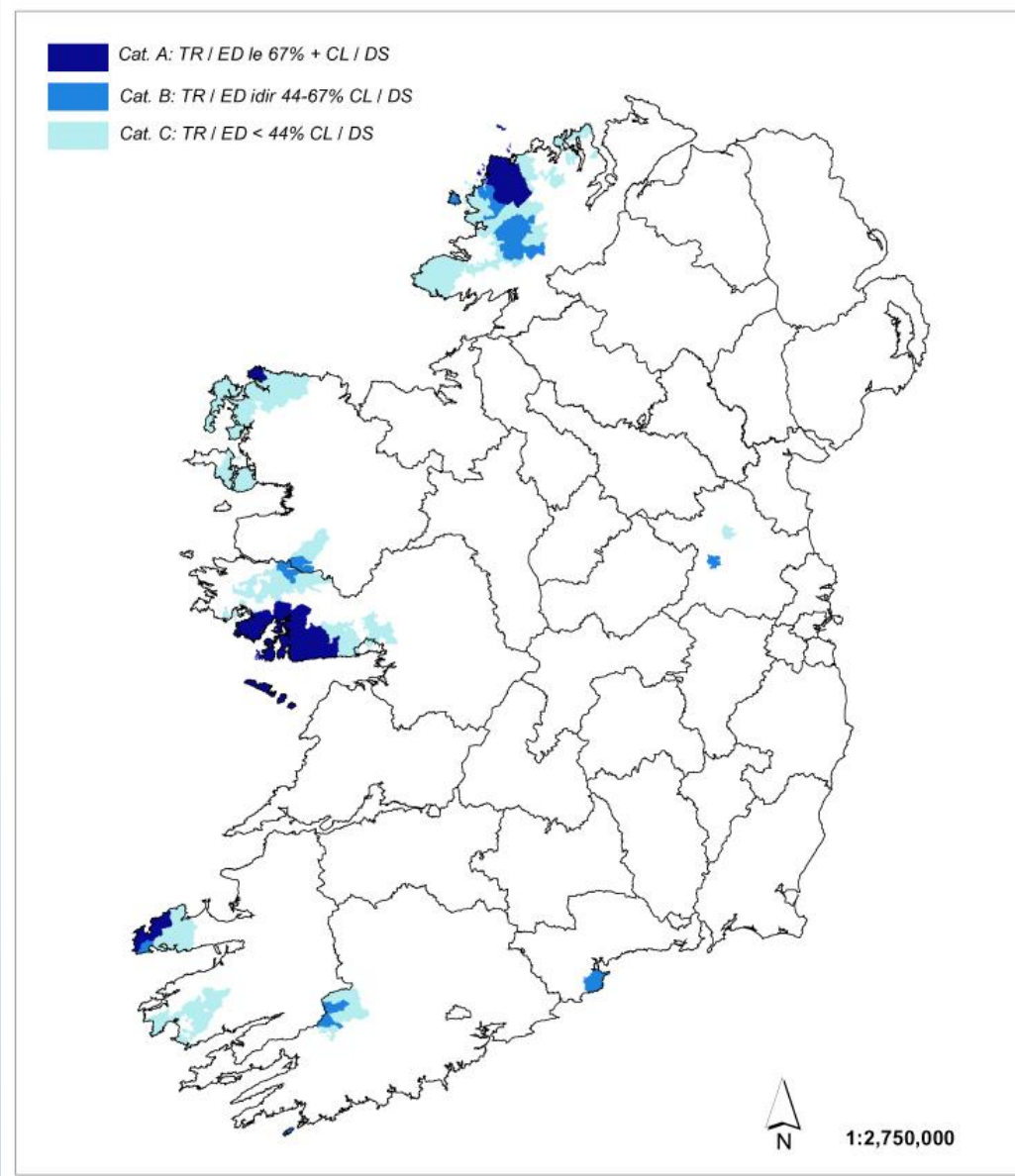
- Comhairle (Council) na Gaeilge 1971 → **Bord na Gaeilge 1978** (now Foras na Gaeilge)
- **Údarás (Authority) na Gaeltachta 1979** – manufacturing employment in Gaeltacht

Minority Survivalism

- **Gaeltacht Commission II 2002** – addressing linguistic crisis
- ***Comprehensive Linguistic Study of the use of Irish in the Gaeltacht*** 2007, 2015

Rhetorical Bilingualism

- **20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010**
- **Gaeltacht Bill 2012**



A, B, C Gaeltacht Categories in Ó Giollagáin, Mac Donnacha et al. 2007. *Comprehensive Linguistic Study of the Use of Irish in the Gaeltacht*. Prepared by NIRSA. Copyright # MP 8252 , © OSI / Government of Ireland.

Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh
National University of Ireland, Galway

COMPREHENSIVE LINGUISTIC STUDY
OF THE USE OF IRISH IN THE GAELTACHT

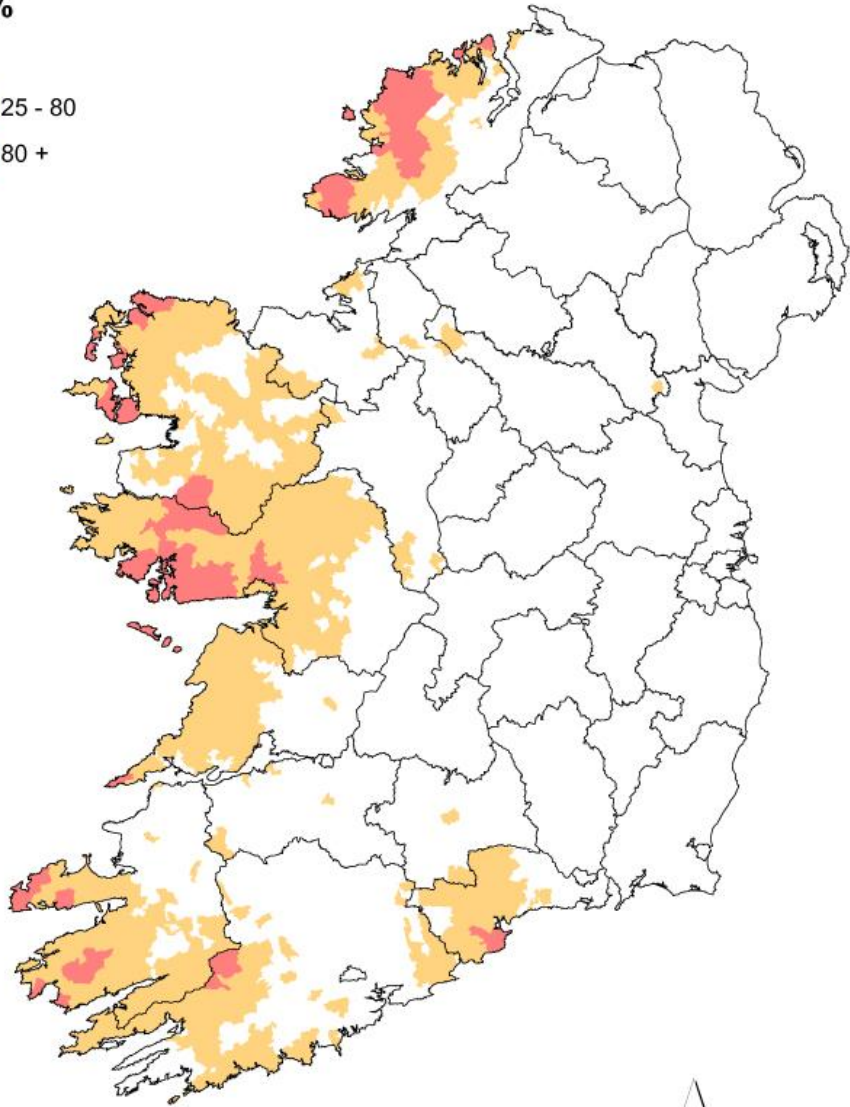
PRINCIPAL FINDINGS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

2007

Conchúr Ó Giollagáin Seosamh Mac Donnacha
Fiona Ní Chualáin
Aoife Ní Shéaghdha
Mary O'Brien

ACADAMH NIRSA

%



1:2750,000

NIRSA Inéitigh, Ceardúnas Ghnmlí MP 8252

© Suirbhéireacht Ordanáis Éireann agus Rialtas na hÉireann

An Phríomh-Oifig Staidrimh – faisnéis SAPS an Daonáirimh

LÉARSCAIL 1.1: TOGHRANNA AR CHAINTEOIRÍ GAELIGE NÍOS MÓ NÁ 25% DÁ NDAONRA DE RÉIR

CHRITÉIR AGUS DHAONÁIREAMH 1926.

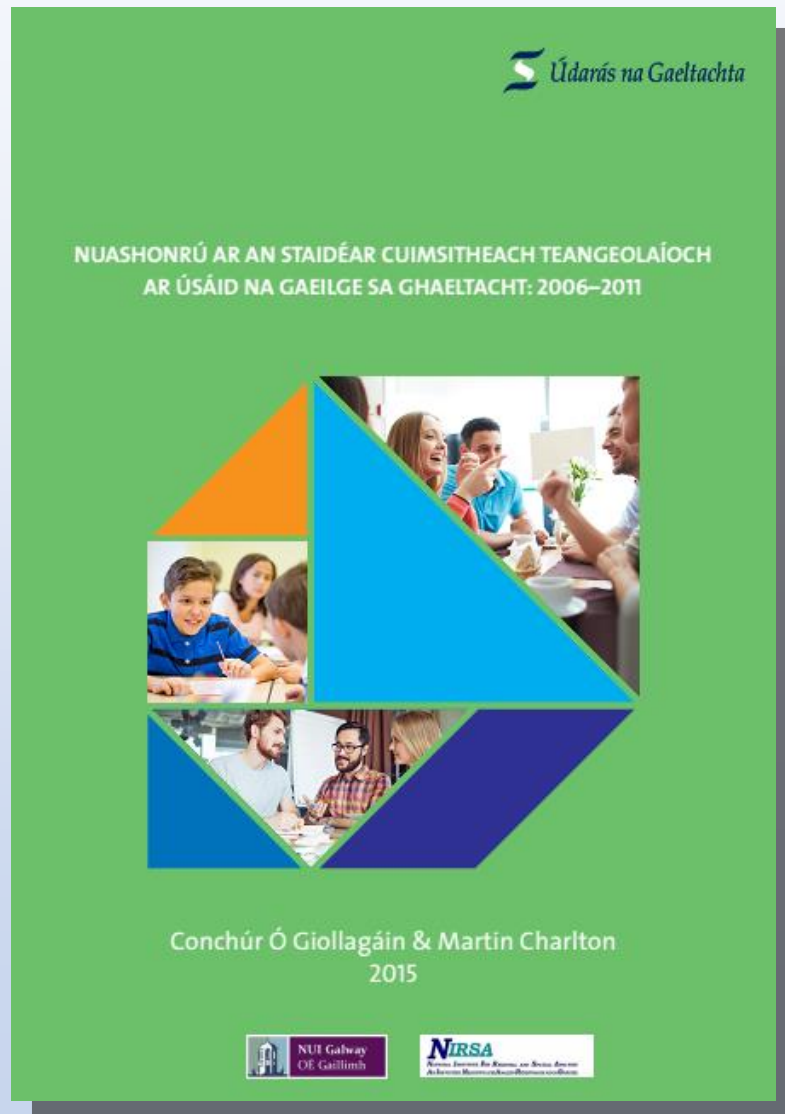
1926 Irish Census:
Speakers of Irish as
Total Percentage in
Electoral Division
In 80% +
And 25-80% breaks

Update of Comprehensive Linguistic Study

Ó Giollagáin and Charlton 2015

Update of Comprehensive Linguistic Study of the Use of Irish in the Gaeltacht: 2006-2011. (New CLS 2015)

Minority speaker groups need to be able to protect the social density of active speakers



A tentative approach to linguistic complexity

- F.S.L. Lyons (1973: 640):
 - ‘The seemingly insoluble difficulties of the Gaeltacht were passed nervously around from one ministry to another and it was not until 1956 that a special Department was set up to look after the area, ... Incredibly enough, it was not until that same year, 1956, that an agreed geographical definition of the Gaeltacht was arrived at.’
- Neglecting the particular for the general
 - Decline in high-density areas Vs. Aspirational regeneration in low density areas



Geographic areas of the remaining Gaelic vernacular communities:

Western Isles; Staffin, north Skye; Isle of Tiree.

Gaelic Crisis in the Vernacular Community.
Ó Giollagáin et al. (2020)

Map:

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet2/on-the-ground/flag-factsheets/outer-hebrides_en



THE GAELIC CRISIS IN THE VERNACULAR COMMUNITY

A comprehensive sociolinguistic
survey of Scottish Gaelic

Conchúr Ó Giollagáin, Gòrdan Camshron,
Pàdruig Moireach, Brian Ó Curnáin, Iain Caimbeul,
Brian MacDonald and Tamás Péterváry

Research Aims of *Gaelic Crisis in the Vernacular Community* study (GCVC)

• *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*

<https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/research-enterprise/research-themes/humanities-and-arts/language-sciences-institute/publications/research-digest/>

Luchd-labhairt Gàidhlig Cunntas 1981 Gaelic Speakers Census 1981

Ceàrnan Sgrùdaidh
Study Districts

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

- 90%+
- <90%
- <75%
- <60%
- <45%



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

Le dàta bho NRS © Dilighe copalaidh is stòir-dàta a' Chrùin 2019.
Le dàta bhon t-Suirbhidh Òrdnais © Dilighe copalaidh 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 2.6 Percentage custom breaks of Gaelic-competent youth in the Research Area, 1981 Census

Luchd-labhairt Gàidhlig Cunntas 2011 Gaelic Speakers Census 2011

Ceàrnan Sgrùdaidh
Study Districts

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

- 90%+
- <90%
- <75%
- <60%
- <45%



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

Le dàta bho NRS © Dilighe copalaidh is stòir-dàta a' Chrùin 2019.
Le dàta bhon t-Suirbhidh Òrdnais © Dilighe copalaidh 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

Luchd-labhairt òg
na Gàidhlig
Young Gaelic
Speakers 1981–
2011