



Comhairle nan Eilean Siar – Development Department

SOCIO ECONOMIC UPDATE

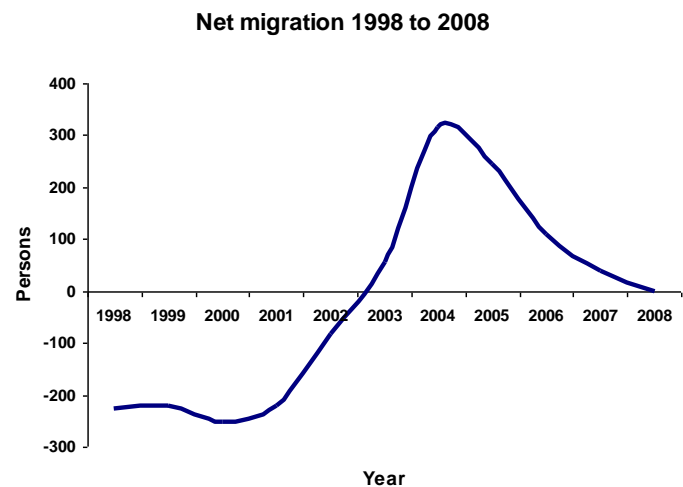
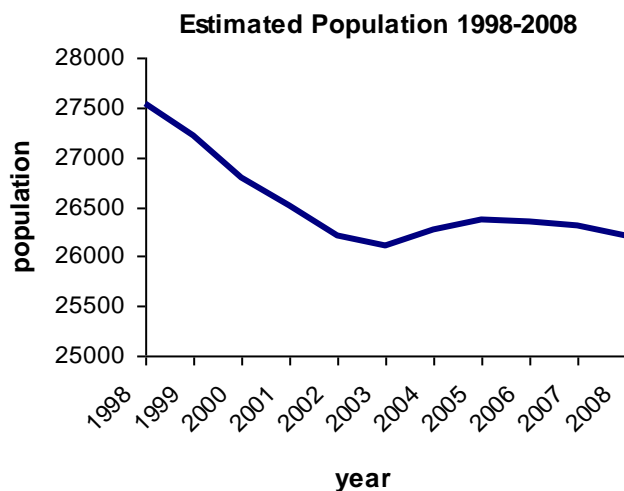
Ag Obair Comhla Airson nan Eilean Siar – Working Together for the Western Isles No.11 (04/09)

Population and Migration

On 28th April 2009 the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) released the mid-2008 [population estimates](#) for Scotland and its administrative areas. Mid-year estimates are made annually and relate to 30th June of the year covered. 'Births' and 'Deaths' are estimated using data from the civil registration system and are virtually complete.

Population Estimates, which are produced yearly, should be differentiated from *Population Projections*, which are released every two years. The last set of projections (2006 based) were published in January 2008 and predicted a -5.5% decline in the overall population of the Outer Hebrides from 2006-2031. These figures represent an improvement on the previous set of projections (2004 based) which indicated a -15% decline between 2004-2024

The GROS estimates that in June 2008, the population of the Outer Hebrides was 26,200. As can be seen from the graph below which illustrates GROS population estimates over the last ten years (1998-2008) this figure demonstrates a decrease of 100 persons (-0.4%) since 2007. This represents a larger decrease than in 2006 (-20) and 2007(-50). The long term trend is one of a declining and ageing population. In contrast other Island areas have seen estimated increases (Orkney 0.2% and Shetland 0.1%).



Deaths (349) continue to exceed births (250) in the Outer Hebrides, resulting in negative natural change of -99 persons. Net migration has been estimated as being positive in previous years, with more people moving here than moving away, but this year has resulted in a negative change of -1. As the graph above illustrates, there have been fluctuations in the migration trend. Net migration has fluctuated from -228 in 1998 to a high of 315 in 2004. After five years of positive net migration this year has now seen this revert to negative net migration (-1).

In 2008, the 'average age' in the Outer Hebrides was estimated to be 42 years for males and 45 years for females with the following age group breakdowns by sex: Males (18% under 16 years; 64% of working age; 18% of pensionable age); Females (17% under 16 years; 52% of working age; and 31% of pensionable age).

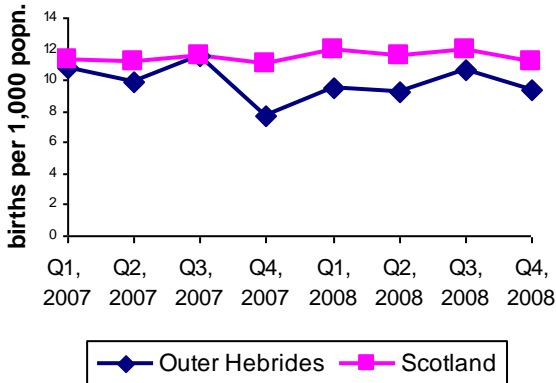
Birth and Death Rates

The General Register Office for Scotland [Vital Events](#) releases quarterly and annual figures for births and deaths.

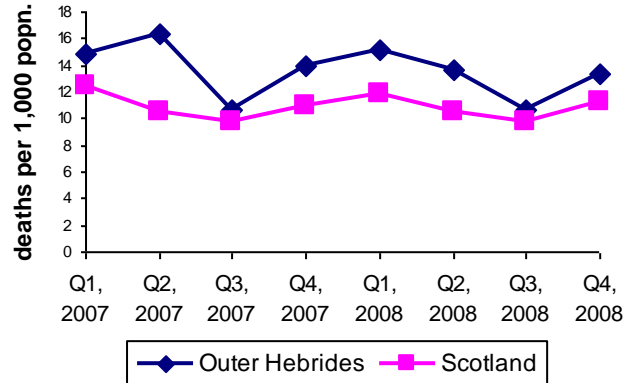
As seen in the table below the birth rate for the Outer Hebrides continues to follow the Scottish trend but is below national average.

As seen in the table below the Outer Hebrides continues to have a high death rate, consistently above the Scottish average.

Birth Rate by Quarterly Return 2007-2008



Death Rate by Quarterly Return 2007-2008



Marriages

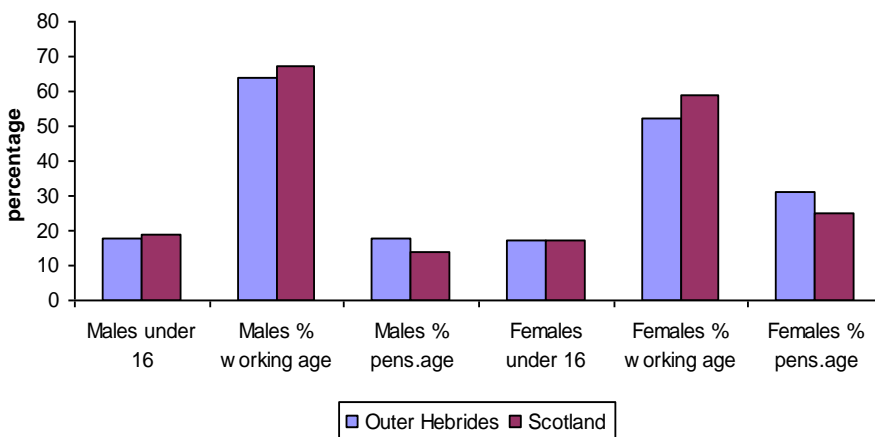
The General Register Office for Scotland [Vital Events](#) releases quarterly and annual figures for marriages. Marriages in the Outer Hebrides have risen from 88 in 2001 to a total of 109 in 2008.

Most Popular Names

GROS have released statistics on the [most popular names](#). The most popular boy's names in 2008 were Calum, Daniel and Joshua, Luke and Matthew (3rd equal). The most popular girl's names were Isla and Eilidh, Emily and Kate (2nd equal).

Age Structure

Estimated Population Age Structure Outer Hebrides and Scotland - 2008



2006 based population projections released by GROS show the population is projected to decline by -5.5% over the period 2006-2031 with: a 25.5% decline in the 0-15 yr age group; an 11.5% decline in the working age population and a 24.3% increase in those of pensionable age. The increase in pensionable age is lower than average in the Outer Hebrides mainly due to the fact that we already have a significantly higher proportion in the elderly age groups. As can be seen from the adjacent graph the % of pensionable age in the Outer Hebrides is already above the national average.

The 2006 projections indicate that in the Outer Hebrides the projected population decline is due to more deaths than births despite positive net in-migration over the period.

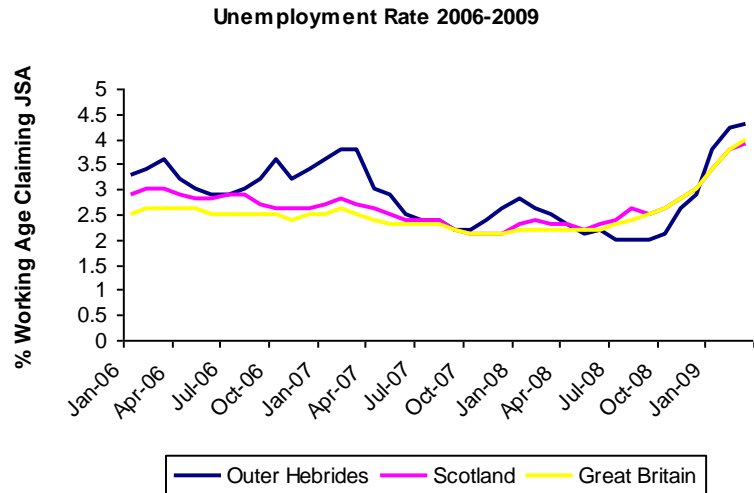
Labour Market

Unemployment Rate

The latest release from [NOMIS](#) (Office for National Statistics) gives the following unemployment rates for March 2009:

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| Outer Hebrides | 4.3% |
| Scotland | 3.9% |
| Great Britain | 4.0% |

As the adjacent graph indicates, the unemployment rate has risen from a record low of 2.0% in September 2008 to 4.3% in March 2009. Although previously below the national average it is now greater than the unemployment rate for Scotland and Great Britain.



Wave Station

Scottish Ministers have granted consent for the [Siadar Wave Energy Project](#) off the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides. This is a joint project between npower renewables and Wavegen and will be one of the world's largest wave stations, creating up to 70 jobs and advancing Scotland's lead in renewable energy. The proposal consisting of an "active breakwater" which will harness power from the waves will generate up to 4 megawatts of electricity. The energy produced each year could supply the average annual electricity needs of approximately 1500 homes, equal to a fifth of all homes on Lewis and Harris.

Education and Training

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| School Attendance 2007/08 | Link |
| Destination of Leavers 2007/08 | Link |
| School Exclusions 2007/08 | Link |
| Promoting Science in Schools | Link |
| What children can legally do | Link |
| Results of pupils in Scotland Census 2008 | Link |

Economy

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Scottish Council of Economic Advisers 1st Report | Link |
| The Scottish National Accounts Project (SNAP) | Link |
| Local Government Financial Statistics 2007/08 | Link |
| Scottish Economic Statistics 2008 | Link |
| Councils Crucial to Economic Recovery | Link |
| Business Gateway | Link |

Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry

Safeguarding Our Fishing Rights :Interim Outcome of Consultation Report

[Link](#)

Proposal for Reform of Common Agricultural Policy

[Link](#)

Video message on bluetongue

[Link](#)

Built Environment

Energy Assistance Package

[Link](#)

National Planning Framework for Scotland 2

[Link](#)

Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey 2008

[Link](#)

Housing Statistics for Scotland 2008

[Link](#)

Health, Care and Welfare

Breast Screening Programme

Western Isles NHS board had the highest percentage uptake of breast screening services for 2004-2007 at 87.4%.

Breast Screening

[Link](#)

Changing Scotland's relationship with Alcohol

[Link](#)

A new approach to Health in Scotland

[Link](#)

Effects of housing and neighbourhood change on health and wellbeing

[Link](#)

Growing up in Scotland (GUS)

[Link](#)

National Debtline

[Link](#)

Are your kids getting the wrong advice about drugs

[Link](#)

Transport, Travel and Tourism

"A better driver can drink more - I've done it" (Driver, 20 to 25 year old, male, urban)

"I don't think my reactions would be influenced at all if I had two drinks" (Driver, 20 to 25 year old, male, rural)

"As a rule I wouldn't drive if I had had anything to drink" (Driver, 16 to 19 year old, male, rural)

Above some of the comments from the research from the "views of young people on road safety issues" - link below.

Views of young people on road safety issues

[Link](#)

Scottish Transport Statistics No. 27 – 2008

[Link](#)

Factors contributing to road accidents

[Link](#)

Crime and Justice

Criminal Justice Social Work Statistics 2007-08

[Link](#)

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland:

Annual Report (2007/08)

[Link](#)

HMICS Scottish Policing Performance Framework

Annual Report (2007-08)

[Link](#)

A New Framework for Local Partnerships on Alcohol and Drugs

[Link](#)

Natural Environment

Coast Hebrides

[Link](#)

Scotland National Rural Network

[Link](#)

Water Framework Directive

[Link](#)

Scottish Environmental Attitudes and

Behaviours Survey 2008

[Link](#)

Scottish Government Response to Sustainable

Seas for All

[Link](#)

Focus on:

Gaelic

Gaelic is a unique part of Scotland's national heritage. The [Gaelic National Plan](#) aims to secure the status of Gaelic in Scotland and reverse the decline in the overall number of people who speak Gaelic. At the last census in 2001 61% of the population in the Outer Hebrides spoke Gaelic.

The aim of the [Comhairle's Gaelic Language Plan](#) is that the Outer Hebrides should be a bilingual community in which Gaelic and English have equal validity as the languages of communication. 'S e amas poileasaidh na Comhairle anns an fharsaingeachd gum bi Na h-Eileanan an Iar gu bunaiteach na choimhearsnachd dhà-chànanach far a bheil an aon ùghdarras aig a' Ghàidhlig agus a' Bheurla mar mheadhanan conaltraidh.

Scottish Government figures from the [2008 Pupil Census](#) reveal a 6% rise in the number of pupils in Scotland being taught through Gaelic medium. The number of pupils in [Gaelic Medium Education](#) in the Outer Hebrides has increased from 27.8% in 2004/05 to 33.5% in 2007/08.

In 2011 [The Royal National Mod](#) returns to Stornoway. Also in 2011 the [Census](#) will offer households the opportunity to complete questionnaires online in either Gaelic or English. More Gaelic related websites below:

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Encouraging the use of Gaelic | Link | Beag air Bheag, | Link |
| Gaelic Resource Database - CnES | Link | BBC Alba | Link |
| Mygaelic | Link | Sabhal Mòr Ostaig | Link |
| Fèisean nan Gàidheal | Link | Comunn na Gàidhlig | Link |
| Pròiseact nan Ealan | Link | Lewis Castle College | Link |

Contact:

If you have any queries or suggestions regarding this bulletin or would like to unsubscribe, please contact:

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This e-bulletin is also available (along with past issues) on the Comhairle's internet/intranet in the 'Fact File'.