



Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - Sustainable Communities

SOCIO ECONOMIC UPDATE

Ag Obair Còmhla Airson nan Eilean Siar - Working Together For The Western Isles No. 7 (03/07)

This is the seventh edition of the Socio Economic Update; a regular e-bulletin which has been designed to keep you up-to-date with recently released socio-economic reports of reference to policy and planning in the Western Isles. The socio-economic information is listed under topic headings.

Population and Migration

In-migration Required to Stabilize Population

In February 2006, the Outer Hebrides Migration Study was launched. The study, undertaken by Hall Aitken Consultancy, was commissioned to investigate the dynamics of migration and population change as it affects the 'Outer Hebrides'.

The study highlights the important role that migration will play in determining the future sustainability of our island populations. The report proposes a number of policy recommendations to combat depopulation; by encouraging in-migration, stemming out-migration and strengthening our island communities.

The overall aim of the research was to identify the causes, key drivers and socio-economic impacts of population change and to propose evidenced based solutions for a 'sustainable' Outer Hebrides population.

An inter-agency strategy group is being formed to progress the reports recommendations and develop a joint action plan to tackle the challenges ahead.

[Outer Hebrides Migration Study](#)

[Press Release OHMS Launch](#)

SNS Website Re-launch

The Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics website was re-launched in February. The new site contains 2,800 indicators and includes significant enhancements over the previous one, including: new 'multi-member ward' and 'community health partnership' geographies. [Link](#)

Electoral Statistics, 2006

This report gives statistics on the 2007 Electoral roll which came into effect on 1 December 2006. [Link](#)

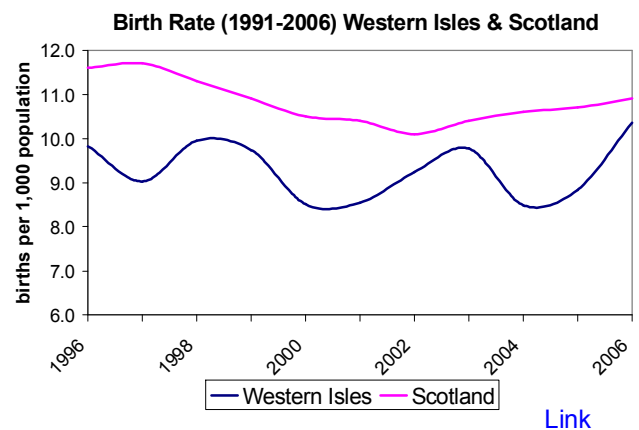
Most Popular Names, 2006

'Angus', 'Daniel' & 'Finlay' were the top three boys names for the Western Isles in 2006; and it was 'Emma', 'Isla' & 'Anna' for the girls. Nationally, the top three names in Scotland were 'Jack', 'Lewis' & 'Callum' and 'Sophie', 'Emma' & 'Erin'. [Link](#)

Preliminary Returns 2006

The General Register Office for Scotland has released provisional figures for vital events registered during 2006. Key findings for the Western Isles include:

- There were 273 births in 2006, giving a birth rate of 10.4 per 1,000 popn (national average 10.9). This is considerably higher than previous years.
- There were 336 deaths in 2006, giving a death rate of 12.7 per 1,000 popn. (national average 10.8).



Strategy for an Ageing Population

By 2031 the number of people aged over 50 is projected to increase by 28% and 75% for over 75s.

The Scottish Executive has recently launched a long term strategy entitled "All Our Futures: Planning for a Scotland with an Ageing Population". The strategy outlines the opportunities and choices available to people as they get older.

The Executive has allocated £27 million of funding to support the strategy. This includes the establishment of a National Forum on Ageing and a new Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice. Additional funding of £14 million in 2007/08 will be made on fuel poverty programmes and an additional £10m has also been allocated to help homeowners adapt their homes to meet changing needs. [Link](#)

Labour Market

Unemployment Update

The latest release from NOMIS (Office for National Statistics) gives the following unemployment rates for February 2007:

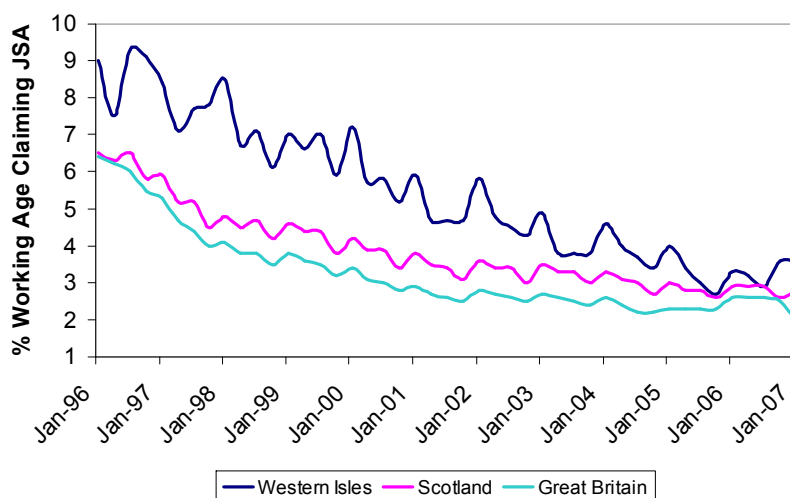
Western Isles	3.8%
Scotland	2.8%
Great Britain	2.6%

This represents a slight increase on previous months (3.6% in October 2006).

As the adjacent graph indicates, over the last ten years we can see that the unemployment rate in the Western Isles has fallen from a high of 9.3% in July 1996 to a low of 2.7% in October 2005.

[Link](#)

Unemployment Rate 1996-2007



Economy

Key Economic Links:

2006 Scottish Economic Statistics	Link
Western Isles Tourism Fact Sheet	Link
Scottish Quarterly GDP 2006, Q2	Link
Scottish Manufactured Exports 2006 Q1	Link
2003 Western Isles Regional Accounts	Link
Scottish Local Govt Finance Statistics	Link
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Annual Report	Link
Rural Scotland Price Survey	Link
HIE Economic Information	Link

Education and Training

Exclusions from Schools 2005/06	Link
SQA Examinations Results 2005/06	Link
School Level Pupil Numbers at Sept 2005	Link
Attendance & Absences in Scottish Schools	Link
Scottish Executive Education Statistics	Link

Agricultural, Fisheries and Forestry

2006 June Agricultural Census	Link
Scottish Fisheries Statistics	Link
Scottish Agricultural Facts & Figures	Link

Health and Care

Updated Health Information on SNS [Link](#)

The February release of the SNS website includes updated hospital admissions data at data zone level and new maternity data (from 2001 to 2005). Life expectancy at birth appears for the first time ever (from 1999 to 2005) and new home care data (2006).

Focus on: ALCOHOL

One indicator which the Western Isles seems to score particularly high in is the 'alcohol related hospital discharge rate' (standardised for age differences); the rate per 10,000 popn for Western Isles (156) was higher than the Scotland rate (75).

[Alcohol Profile: Western Isles 2006 \(ISD\)](#)

['Alcohol Information Scotland' Website](#)

Social and Welfare

Focus on: INCOME

Figures from the 2006 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings Survey show the following results for gross weekly pay (relating to gross pay before tax, national insurance or other deductions or contributions): [Link](#)

W. Isles: £402.7 **Scotland:** £432.0 **GB:** £448.6

Scottish Index of Deprivation 2006	Link
Service Priority, Accessibility & Quality in Rural Scotland	Link
Social Focus on Deprived Areas	Link
Closing the Opportunities Gap	Link
Social Work Scotland Website	Link

Focus on: CROFTING

Below is a summary sheet by island from the local Crofters Commission office (2007):

Area		2002	2003	2004	2005	2007
Lewis	Total number of crofts registered with the Crofters Commission	3614	3613	3613	3614	3608
	Total number of cattle	1152	1198	1230	1290	
	Total number of sheep	138817	132554	123679	106860	
	No. of owner occupied crofts	-	-	-	-	29
Harris	Total number of crofts registered with the Crofters Commission	561	561	561	563	561
	Total number of cattle	361	281	286	289	
	Total number of sheep	47626	45781	41731	39862	
	No. of owner occupied crofts	-	-	-	-	15
North & South Uist	Total number of crofts registered with the Crofters Commission	1405	1405	1405	1406	1410
	Total number of cattle	4361	4130	4159	4272	
	Total number of sheep	71268	64401	61548	60640	
	No. of owner occupied crofts	-	-	-	-	42
Barra	Total number of crofts registered with the Crofters Commission	444	444	444	444	443
	Total number of cattle	630	654	631	713	
	Total number of sheep	11476	11217	10386	10209	
	No. of owner occupied crofts	-	-	-	-	3
Western Isles Totals	Total number of crofts registered with the Crofters Commission	6024	6023	6023	6027	6022
	Total number of cattle	6504	6263	6306	6564	-
	Total number of sheep	269187	253953	237344	217571	-
	No. of owner occupied crofts	-	-	-	-	89



Natural Environment

Key Scottish Environmental Statistics 06 [Link](#)

High level summary statistics on: *Global Atmosphere; Air Quality; Water; Marine; Land; Waste; Biodiversity.*

Scottish Environmental Statistics Online

Contains information under the following categories:

Climate Change and the Ozone Layer; Air Quality; Noise Pollution; Inland Water Quality and Use Coastal and Marine Waters; Waste and Recycling; Public Attitudes; Radioactivity; Land; Conservation; Biodiversity.

[Link](#)

Built Environment

Housing Trends in Scotland, Q3 2006 [Link](#)

- *Number of dwellings on the council tax register as at 06/09/05 for Western Isles was: 13,759.*
- *Estimated number of recipients of housing benefit in the Western Isles was: 1,300.*
- *Quarter ending 30 September 2006:*
- 71 new dwellings started; 35 completed.

Scottish Vacant & Derelict Land Survey 06

[Link](#)

Hebridean Housing Partnership

[Link](#)

From the Archive: *Extract from 1871 Census*

For interest: below is an extract from the 1871 Census discussing social issues in the Western Isles. 'Gender Imbalance' and the 'Gaelic language' are topics of debate, with a number of radical solutions being suggested.

What to do with the excess of females left in the Mainland-Rural and Insular-Rural Districts is a question of the utmost importance in social economics. It is quite apparent from these statistics that female emigration should be encouraged to a much greater extent, both to our Colonies and larger Towns. But a formidable barrier to the emigration of females to our Towns exists in the fact that over a great portion of the north and west of Scotland, and all the Western Isles, the Gaelic language is still encouraged, and the Population are cut off from emigrating to the Towns from a want of knowledge of the English tongue. The Gaelic language may be what it likes, both as to antiquity and beauty, but it decidedly stands in the way of the civilisation of the natives making use of it, and shuts them out from the paths open to their fellow-countrymen who speak the English tongue. It ought, therefore, to cease to be taught in all our national schools; and as we are one people, we should have but ONE language.



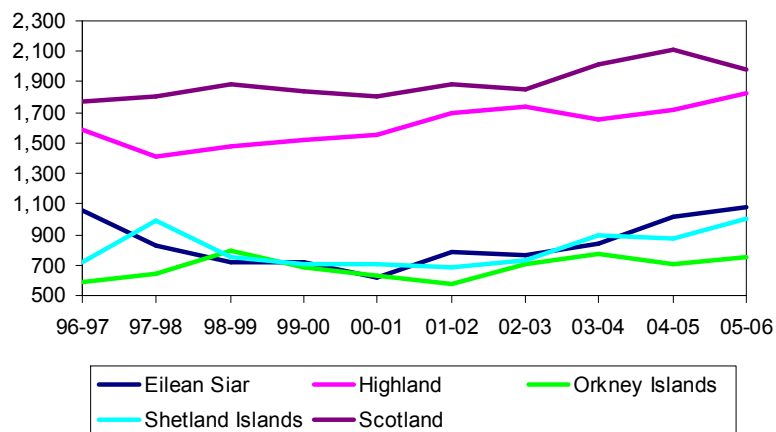
Crime and Justice

Recorded Crime in Scotland 2005/06

The graph below illustrates how the total crime rate for the Western Isles and neighbouring local authorities [Link](#)

[Criminal Justice Social Work Statistics 2005/06](#) [Link](#)

Total Crimes and Offences per 10,000 popn.



Transport, Travel and Tourism

HIAL Passenger Numbers 2006/07

Recent Highlands & Islands Airport Limited (HIAL) figures show an increase of 7% in passenger numbers over 11 months.

An additional 71,000 passengers have used its 10 airports since April 2006 compared to a year previous. Aircraft movements at the airports have also increased by almost 9%. Increases to the frequency of flights, new routes and the introduction of the Scottish Executive's Air Discount Scheme in May 2006 have all contributed to passenger growth across the region's air network. [Link](#)

[Scottish Transport Statistics 2005](#) [Link](#)

[Main Transport Trends, 2006](#) [Link](#)

[Key 2005 Road Accidents Statistics](#) [Link](#)

[Bus and Coach Statistics 2005/06](#) [Link](#)

Contact

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