

Radar Blip^(revised)

The 2001 census tells us there are **50,235** Ireland-born Celts in Australia as well as **1.9 m** first and second Australian born generations, and that's not including the Scots & Welsh. But it seems that our Celtic languages just aren't registering on SBS Radar.

Despite our numbers, SBS's axing of the three Celtic Language programs in 2003 seems to indicate that Aussie-Celts and their languages just aren't "rating" as a distinct demographic, let alone a source of economic, cultural, social and knowledge capital. Nor does it appear to register that we have a unique cultural identity/a hierarchy of identities. Or that we also possess a dynamic spoken and written language with its own extensive literature, vocabulary, grammar, syntax and social history.

Even though Gaelic may not be showing up in the Census as a LOTE (language other than English), the fact is, some of us are fluent Gaelgeoirí and most, if not all the 50, 235 Éireann-born people plus an increasing number of 1st & 2nd generations (1.9M+) are familiar with an Gaelige and want to hear it on SBS.

Knowledge Capital

The combined energies, intelligence, education, enterprise, initiative, creativity, skills, linguistic abilities and expertise of Aussie-Celts have brought incalculable and intangible benefits to Australia. Our industry and taxes help boost the economy and contribute to the well-being of the nation. Our many and varied voluntary activities among the community helps reduce social welfare costs.

The business, banking, retail, industrial, manufacturing, and construction industries owe much to our presence, as do the health; education; regional, municipal and community sectors, as well as the arts, hospitality, entertainment, sport, horse and greyhound racing ... not to mention real estate, politics, and the media!

Not Cricket

Aussie-Celts consider themselves an integral part of mainstream Australian culture, but we also have some aspects in common with Indigenous and some Ethnic groups. Why, some of us still need interpreters! And besides, a knowledge of Irishspeak is necessary to understand the word boycott!

The big question is, do we "suigh ar ár ngeaddáin" and let our language evaporate from SBS, or will we engage in a more active campaign to heighten political awareness and work towards "re-adjusting SBS' program mix"? (FB)

Feachtas Campaign

Taking Note of Language

Extinction by Dr Margit Waas

[selected extract downloaded from www.colorado.edu/iec/alis/articles/langext.htm]

"...Language is a question of identity... some people are good at fine arts or physics, others at music or sports but language is the only tool that each and everyone has the capacity to use. Just as environmental balance is achieved by the multitude of varieties; equally, a linguistic balance of different languages is essential in preserving cultural diversity..."

Endangered Species

According to Dr Margaret Florey, senior lecturer in Linguistics, Monash University, (Australian, 13/14-09-03) more than half the world's 6000 or so languages have disappeared since the beginning of the 20th century and in another century, many others will also have become extinct — subsumed by meta-languages such as Spanish, English, Chinese, Arabic.

She warns that "languages are under as much threat as endangered plants and animals and reflect the collapse of biodiversity worldwide... Saving languages is about preserving a more diverse world and creating bridges of understanding. It's also about preserving history — some forms of language date back to the time of Homo Erectus and it's the one thing that separates us from the animals..."

Status Symbols

Bob Beale, ABC Science Online, says that "languages compete with each other much like plants and animals, but those driven to extinction are almost always tongues with a "perceived" low economic status ...

Their fate depends **not** just on numbers and the transmission and evolution of syntax, grammar, or other structural properties of a language... When two languages are in competition, the one that affords the greatest economic opportunities will usually prevail. "

It's suggested that only determined/active intervention to boost the status and prestige of rare and endangered languages can save them.(Quebec is cited as one example)

"Speaking your Language"

(selection downloaded from SBS site)
[bold font emphases by FB]

Networking

"Our charter is to provide multilingual and multicultural radio and television services that inform, educate and entertain **all Australians** and, in doing so, **reflect** Australia's multicultural society.

"SBS Radio was set up in 1975 by the Commonwealth Government to promote the launch of Medibank, broadcasting in a number of languages, in Sydney and Melbourne "Our national radio service is networked from Sydney and Melbourne and broadcasts to Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Darwin, Hobart, Perth, Wollongong, Newcastle, the Hunter Valley & Young. "Today, Sydney and Melbourne are each served by an AM and FM station which daily broadcasts **18 hours** of language programmes starting at 6 am.

"SBS broadcasts in **68 languages**. Beginning at 6 am every morning, a **different language programme** is heard every hour up until midnight. "Programmes are based on **language not nationality** - ie the same Arabic and Spanish programmes are listened to by people from many different countries and cultures.

"The amount of programme time each language group gets is guided by the size of the community, its needs, eg language proficiency, age, employment, etc, and its geographic distribution within Australia.

Applied Mathematics

(x FB as per above figs)

18 broadcast hrs per day x 7 days = 126 broadcast hrs available
126 avail hrs – 68 languages = 58 hours
Dá bhrí sin 58 hrs outstanding

Dearcaidh/Viewpoints

Unless particularly specified, all viewpoints expressed in An Fhuinneog Ghaelach are the personal opinion(s) of each individual scribe.

British and Irish Ancestries in Australia

(downloaded from ABS Census 2001 website/*bold-face emphases and brackets in italics FB*)

“From the beginning of the colonial period (1788) until after WW2, people from the UK and Ireland made up a large majority of people coming to Australia. They continue to make up a substantial proportion of immigrants (for example 10% of those arriving between 1986 and 2001 came from England, the second largest group after New Zealanders). Therefore, many Australian-born people can trace their origins to these countries.

“In 1986, 8.2 million people (57% of the population) reported at least one British or Irish ancestry. Despite continued immigration from the United Kingdom and Ireland, in 2001 the total number stating a British or Irish ancestry decreased to 7.7 million, or 44% of the population. **However, different trends were observed for the two ancestry groups.**”

Trends

“All the British ancestries decreased in number and as a proportion of the population. English ancestry was reported by 6.6 million people (46%) in 1986. This decreased to 6.4m (37%) in 2001. The numbers of people stating Scottish and Welsh ancestries decreased more markedly than did the number reporting English ancestry (by 27% and 29% respectively).

However, in contrast to these decreases, the number of people stating **Irish ancestry** more than **doubled**, from 903,000 to 1.9m, and as a proportion of the population this group increased from 6% to 11%. Australian-born people with Australian-born parents were the major contributors to these changes.

Among these people, the proportion stating a British ancestry decreased from 59% in 1986 to 41% in 2001, while the proportion stating **Irish ancestry** increased from **8% to 14%**. As well as the changes to the format of the ancestry question between censuses, the reasons for these changes may include changes in the perception or awareness of British or Irish ancestry among people in Australia.

It has been suggested that a new, positive stereotype of Irish people has replaced a negative view...”

Generations in Australia

(a) First generation (b) Second generation (c) Australian born of Australian-born parents (d) also stated another ancestry
(e) spoke a language other than English at home (f) proportion of the Australian population (g) Total

Ancestry	(a) %	(b) %	(c) %	(d) %	(e) %	(f) %	(g) '000,
Australian	1.5	15.7	82.8	24.3	1.2	38.7	6,739.6
English	18.7	21.1	60.2	41.8	0.9	36.5	6,358.9
Irish	11.4	16.4	72.1	75.8	1.1	11.0	1,919.7
Italian	30.9	44.4	24.7	33.9	42.3	4.6	800.3
German	19.0	22.5	58.5	68.3	9.8	4.3	742.2
Chinese	74.1	20.7	5.2	14.8	79.6	3.2	556.6
Scottish	28.2	26.7	45.1	57.1	0.9	3.1	540.0
Greek	37.8	46.2	16.0	21.2	68.8	2.2	375.7
Dutch	39.4	44.9	15.7	42.7	15.1	1.5	268.8
Lebanese	43.7	50.0	6.4	12.0	80.0	0.9	162.2
Indian	77.4	20.7	2.0	17.1	60.2	0.9	156.6
Vietnamese	73.8	25.9	0.3	6.0	95.9	0.9	156.6
Polish	49.3	38.4	12.3	36.7	40.1	0.9	150.9

[acknowledged to the second generation; third and beyond, not found. FB]

“DNA”

(downloaded from ABS 2001 Census) *[Italics and boldface emphases FB]*

“In 2001, the two most common (*acknowledged 1st & 2nd generation*) **ancestries** of the Australian population were Australian (reported by 6.7 million people) and English (reported by 6.4 million

The third most common was **Irish (1.9 million people)**, followed by Italian (800,000), German (742,000), Chinese (557,000) and **Scottish (540,000)**.

“A further six ancestries were each stated by between 150,000 and 500,000 people - Greek, Dutch, Lebanese, Indian, Vietnamese and Polish.

“In total, more than 160 ancestries were separately identified, many of which were relatively uncommon

Muintir na h'Astráile

Sínsearachtaí/Ancestry (ABS 2001 Census) [bold face & italic font/emphases FB]

Nos of people who stated Ancestry in 2001 Census in descending order by size

6.7 million	Australian
6.4 million	English
1.9 million	Irish
500,000 - 999,999	Italian, German, Chinese, Scots
150,000 - 499,999	Greek, Dutch, Lebanese, Indian, Vietnamese, Polish
50,000 - 149,999	Maltese, Filipino, New Zealander, Croatian, Serbian, Australian Aboriginal, Welsh , Macedonian, French, Spanish, Maori, Hungarian, Russian, Sinhalese, Turkish, South African
20,000 - 49,999	American, Korean, Danish, Austrian, Portuguese, Ukrainian, Japanese, Indonesian, Samoan, Egyptian, Swedish, Jewish, Swiss, Chilean, Khmer, Thai, Canadian
10,000 - 19,999	Latvian, Iranian, Assyrian/Chaldean, Malay , Finnish, Bosnian, Mauritian, Norwegian, Czech, Fijian, Romanian, Tongan, Armenian, Slovene, Pakistani, Lao, Afghan, Anglo-Indian, Lithuanian, Iraqi, Burmese, Albanian, Syrian
5,000 - 9,999	Torres Strait Islander, Bengali, Papua New Guinean, Cook Islander, Tamil, Estonian, Slovak, Palestinian, Salvadoran, Argentinian, Timorese, Uruguayan, Somali
2,500 - 4,999	Peruvian, Kurdish, Taiwanese, Bulgarian, Sudanese, Brazilian, Colombian, Australian South Sea Islander, Coptic, Ethiopian, Nepalese, Zimbabwean, Jordanian, Hispanic (Nth American)
Less than 2,500	70 other [incl. Amharic]

TÍR/COUNTRY of Birth

CINEÁL/GENDER

Male Fireannach Female Baineannach Persons Daoine

Australia	6,709,482	6,920,203	13,629,685
CANADA	13,057	14,232	
27,289			
CHINA (EXC SARs AND TAIWAN PR)	66,608		
76,172	142,780		
CROATIA	27,126	24,783	
51,909			
EGYPT	17,001	16,431	
33,432			
FIJI	20,669	23,592	
44,261			
FRANCE	8,665	8,603	
17,268			
GERMANY	52,405	55,815	
108,220			
GREECE	58,767	57,664	
116,431			
HONG KONG (SAR OF CHINA)	32,527		
34,595	67,122		
INDIA	50,438	45,014	
95,452			
INDONESIA	21,949	25,209	
47,158			
Ireland	25,972	24,263	50,235*
ITALY	114,838	103,880	
218,718			
KOREA, REPUBLIC OF (SOUTH)	17,972		
20,928	38,900		
LEBANON	37,109	34,240	
71,349			
MACEDONIA,	22,385	21,142	
43,527			
MALAYSIA	36,350	42,508	
78,858			

A Fair Go/write to Embassy of Ireland, Canberra/re SBS axings

Has any Toscaire/Delegate from the Republic of Eire contacted SBS about the decision (allegedly based on ABS 2001 Census stats, commercial considerations, frequencies, etc) to axe the Irish Language program? And/or have they "lobbied" the Australian Communications Minister(s) and others regarding this matter?

After all, several countries with lesser numbers have retained their access to SBS 1224KHz and 93.1 MHz Frequencies. A quick browse thru the *Age Green Guide* shows *French* with more than one time-slot and (ref ABS figs. above) there are only 17,268 French-born people here. Danish has also retained a timeslot as have various other languages with lesser numbers of residents... (FB)

Constitution of Ireland (Adopted 1937)/Article 8 [Language]

- (1) The Irish language as the national language, is the first official language.
- (2) The English language is recognized as a second official language.
- (3) Provision may, however, be made **by law** for the **exclusive** use of either of the said languages for any one or more official purposes, either throughout the State or in any part thereof.

Bilateral Campaign

Federal Ministers

Communications, I.T. & Arts

(*this portfolio includes broadcasting*)

The Hon Daryl Williams *also*
Senator the Hon. Rod Kemp

Treasurer & Revenue

The Hon. Peter Costello

Finance & Administration

Sen. the Hon. Nick Minchin

Industry, Tourism & Resources

The Hon. Ian Macfarlane

Small Business & Tourism

The Hon. Joe Hockey

Immigration, Multicultural &

Indigenous Affairs

Sen. the Hon. Amanda Vanstone

Citizenship/Multicultural Affairs

also Minister assisting the PM

The Hon. Gary Hardgrave

Education, Science and Training

The Hon. Brendan Nelson*

Federal MPs

Members representing Victorian Voters

Andrews, The Hon Kevin, for Menzies

Bailey, The Hon Fran, for McEwen

Barresi, Mr Phillip, for Deakin

Billson, Mr Bruce, for Dunkley

Burke, Ms Anna, Member for Chisholm

Byrne, Mr Anthony, Member for Holt

Charles, Mr Bob, Member for La Trobe

Corcoran, Ms Ann, Member for Isaacs

Costello, The Hon Peter, for Higgins

Crean, The Hon Simon, for Hotham

Danby, Mr Michael, for Melbourne Ports

Ferguson, Mr Martin, Member for Batman

Forrest, Mr John, Member for Mallee

Georgiou, Mr Petro, Member for Kooyong

Gibbons, Mr Steve, Member for Bendigo

Gillard, Ms Julia, Member for Lalor

Griffin, Mr Alan, Member for Bruce

Hawker, Mr David, Member for Wannon

Hunt, Mr Greg, Member for Flinders

Jenkins, Mr Harry, Member for Scullin

Kemp, The Hon Dr David, for Goldstein

King, Ms Catherine, Member for Ballarat

Macklin, Ms Jenny, Member for Jagajaga

McArthur, Mr Stewart, for Corangamite

McGauran, The Hon Peter, for Gippsland

O'Connor, Mr Brendan, Member for Burke

O'Connor, Mr Gavan, Member for Corio

Panopoulos, Ms Sophie, Member for Indi

Pearce, Mr Chris, Member for Aston

Roxon, Ms Nicola, Member for Gellibrand

Sercombe, Mr Bob, for Maribyrnong

Smith, Mr Tony, Member for Casey

Stone, The Hon Dr Sharman, for Murray

Tanner, Mr Lindsay, for Melbourne

Thomson, Mr Kelvin, Member for Wills

Vamvakinou, Ms Maria, for Calwell

Zahra, Mr Christian, Member for McMillan

Suggestions/Strategies

It's up to each one of us, either individually or collectively, to come up with some new/alternative strategies if we wish to raise the status of, and create political awareness of our cultural language as well as put pressure on SBS to reinstate/reschedule the Celtic Languages. Suggestions welcome.

Beannachtaí na Nollag

In the meantime, perhaps each of us could send a polite Merry Christmas written in Irish/as Gaeilge to our Federal Ministers for Communications; Immigration; Tourism, etc. We may sign our names as Cumann members and use the Cumann's address if we so wish. (Include honorifics as indicated)

To find more info and addresses of Ministers' electoral offices, email fax, etc

Local Library:

Reference Section

Internet:

www.fed.gov.au

www.gov.au

Mail may also be addressed to
Parliament House,
CANBERRA, ACT 2600

Senators representing Victorians

[Allison Lyn](#),
[Alston The Hon. Richard](#),
[Carr Kim](#),
[Collins Jacinta](#),
[Conroy Stephen](#),
[Kemp The Hon. Rod](#),
[Marshall Gavin](#),
[McGauran Julian](#),
[Patterson The Hon. Kay](#),
[Ray Robert](#),
[Tchen Tsebin](#),
[Troeth The Hon. Judith](#),

Other Senators

Santoro, Santo, (Qld)
Harradine, Brian, (Tas)
O'Brien, Kerry, (Tas)
Moore, Claire ((Qld)
Wong, Penny, (SA)

Vic State Government

For a more detailed break-down of Vic-Irish ABS Statistics contact:

Mr Ozan Ibrsim,

Ministerial Advisor to

The Hon John Pandazopolous

Minister for

Tourism & Major Events,

Gaming, Racing, and

Minister Assisting the Premier

on Multi-Cultural Affairs

ozan.ibrisim@minstaff.vic.gov.au
55 Collins Street Melbourne. 3000
Telephone 9651 9320
Fax 9651 9915

For other State Representatives
browse www.vic.gov.au

For Cultural Diversity Statistics Vic
Browse www.voma.vic.gov.au

The Hon John Pandazopolous might appreciate the following (FB)

Poseidonians

CPCavafy (1906)

(*Interpretation: E Keeley & P Sherrard*)

[substitute Gael for Greek: FB]

The Poseidonians forgot the Greek language after so many years of mingling with Tyrrenians, Latins, and other foreigners.

The only thing surviving from their ancestors Was a Greek festival, with beautiful rites.

With lyres, and flutes, contests and wreaths.

And it was their habit at festival's end to tell each other about their ancient customs

And once again to speak Greek names that only a few of them still recognised.

And so their festival day always had a melancholy ending because

They remembered that they too were Greeks:

They too, once upon a time, were citizens of Magna Graecia.

And how low they'd fallen; what they'd become, living and

speaking like Barbarians Cut off so disastrously from the Greek way of life.