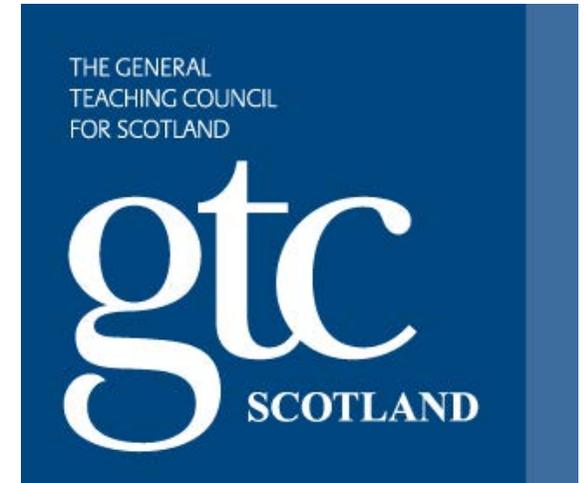


INSPIRING WORLD-CLASS
TEACHING PROFESSIONALISM



Gaelic Medium Survey

An analysis of the 2020 Gaelic Medium survey

February 2021

Contents

Contents	1
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Question 1: Are you currently teaching Gaelic or through the medium of Gaelic?	1
1.2 Question 2: Which one of the following categories best describes your current teaching situation? (please tick the most appropriate option below)	2
1.3 Question 3: In the context of your response to question 1, what are the barriers preventing you from teaching in the medium of Gaelic? (Multiple choice)	3
1.4 Question 4: In the context of your response to question 1, what supports do you require to allow you to consider teaching in the medium of Gaelic? (Multiple choice)	4
2 Geographical analysis	5
3 Conclusion	6
4 Next steps	6

1 Introduction

In 2020 and in support of the Deputy First Minister's Faster Rate of Progress initiative to promote Gaelic language, GTC Scotland sent out a survey to all 76,600 active registrants, to find out more about the interest in teaching Gaelic Medium (GME) in Scotland's schools. The survey was made up of four questions, which were designed to provide a picture of where interests in teaching Gaelic might lie. The questions also asked respondents to note what they felt were the most critical barriers and what would best support routes into teaching Gaelic.

1,552 people responded to the survey. This represents just over 2% of those on GTC Scotland's Register.

1.1 Question 1: Are you currently teaching Gaelic or through the medium of Gaelic?

The survey was sent to every teacher on the Register. Those already teaching Gaelic comprised 10% (153) of respondents (Figure 1). The remaining 90% (1,399) answered 'No' to this question.

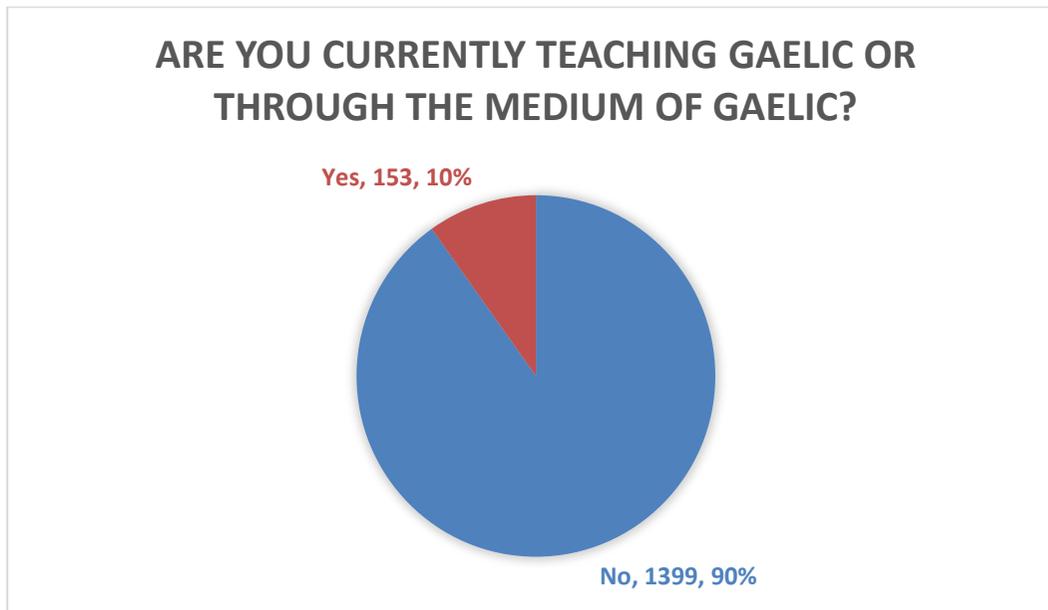


Figure 1

1.2 Question 2: Which one of the following categories best describes your current teaching situation? (please tick the most appropriate option below)

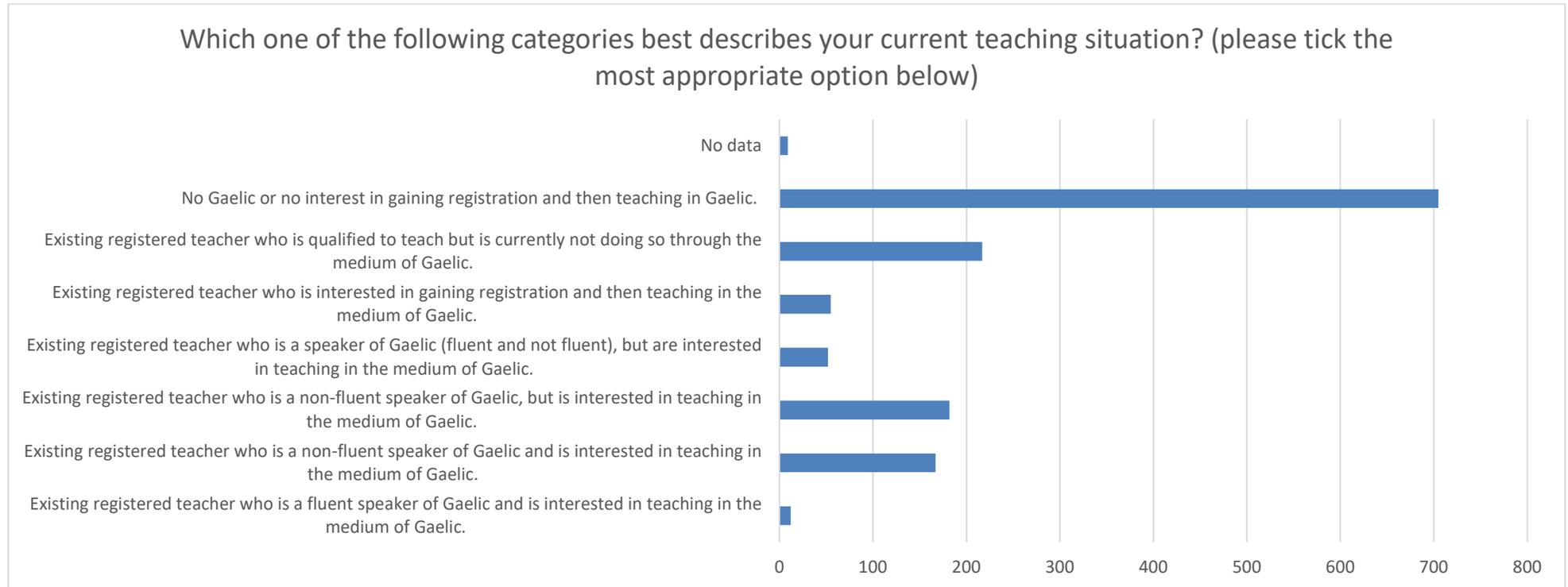


Figure 2

As shown in Figure 2, the majority (705) of the 1,399 respondents answered that they had no Gaelic skills or no interest in teaching in Gaelic. However, almost half (685) of the respondents mentioned that they had some level of interest in teaching Gaelic; whether they are a fluent speaker or still need to learn the language. It is in this group of 685 registrants that there is some potential to increase the Gaelic-teaching workforce.

1.3 Question 3: In the context of your response to question 1, what are the barriers preventing you from teaching in the medium of Gaelic? (Multiple choice)

The analysis of the final two questions in Figures 3 and 4 relate to the 685 respondents who showed interest in teaching Gaelic. They look at the perceived barriers to becoming a Gaelic teacher and the areas of support needed to do so. Note that some respondents indicated several barriers and supports.

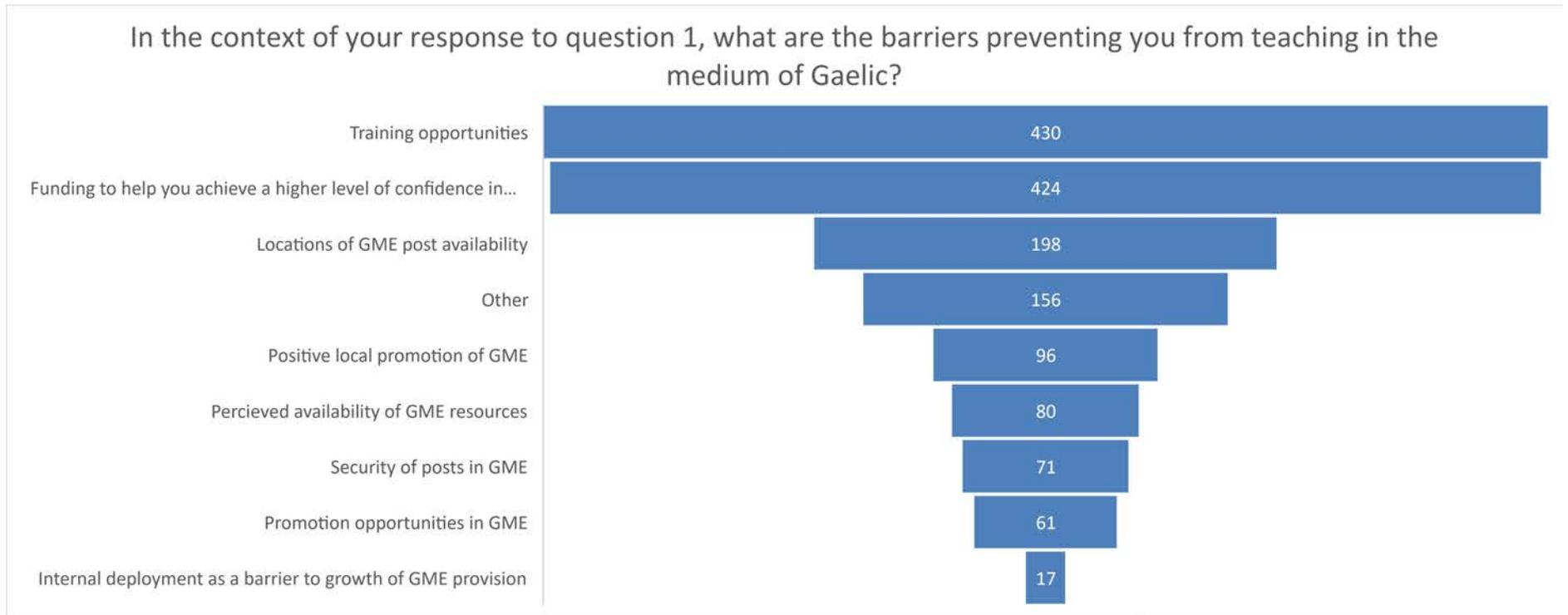


Figure 3

Both training and funding ranked high in response to this question as the main barrier preventing people from pursuing a role in Gaelic. This was followed by the location of GME posts. A geographical analysis can be found below in Figure 5.

In the 'Other responses', the main themes identified were: the level of Gaelic held by respondents (43); lack of time to undertake training and develop skills (21); and lack of support or availability of posts from local authorities or schools (24).

1.4 Question 4: In the context of your response to question 1, what supports do you require to allow you to consider teaching in the medium of Gaelic? (Multiple choice)

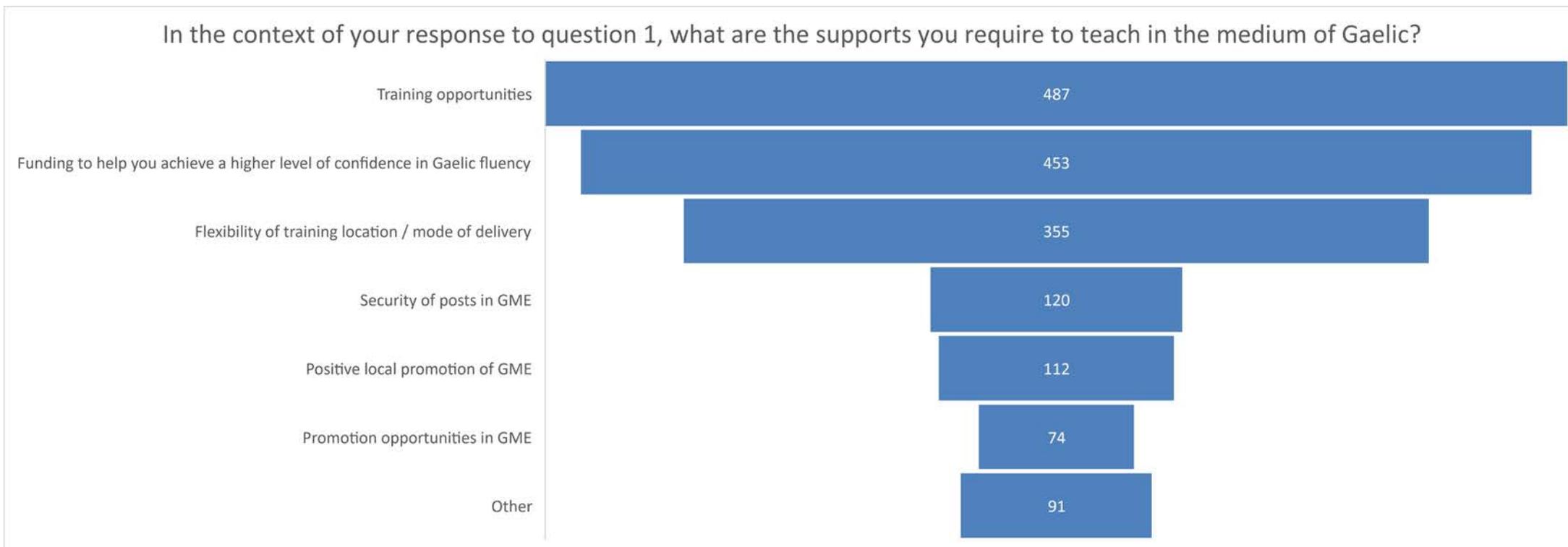


Figure 4

In terms of supports, the top three responses clearly reflected those of question 3: training opportunities; funding for training; and flexibility of training location/mode of delivery.

Of the 91 'other' responses to this question, most respondents (25) said that having jobs available would help in entering GME. This was largely related to their location and the prevalence of Gaelic in the area they teach. Linked to this was support from local authorities and schools. Six respondents identified that more support was needed from their local authorities or schools.

2 Geographical analysis

Location information was a theme that emerged throughout the respondents' answers to questions 3 and 4. Analysis was done to map the location of the 685 respondents who had indicated an interest in teaching Gaelic. This information is shown in Figure 5

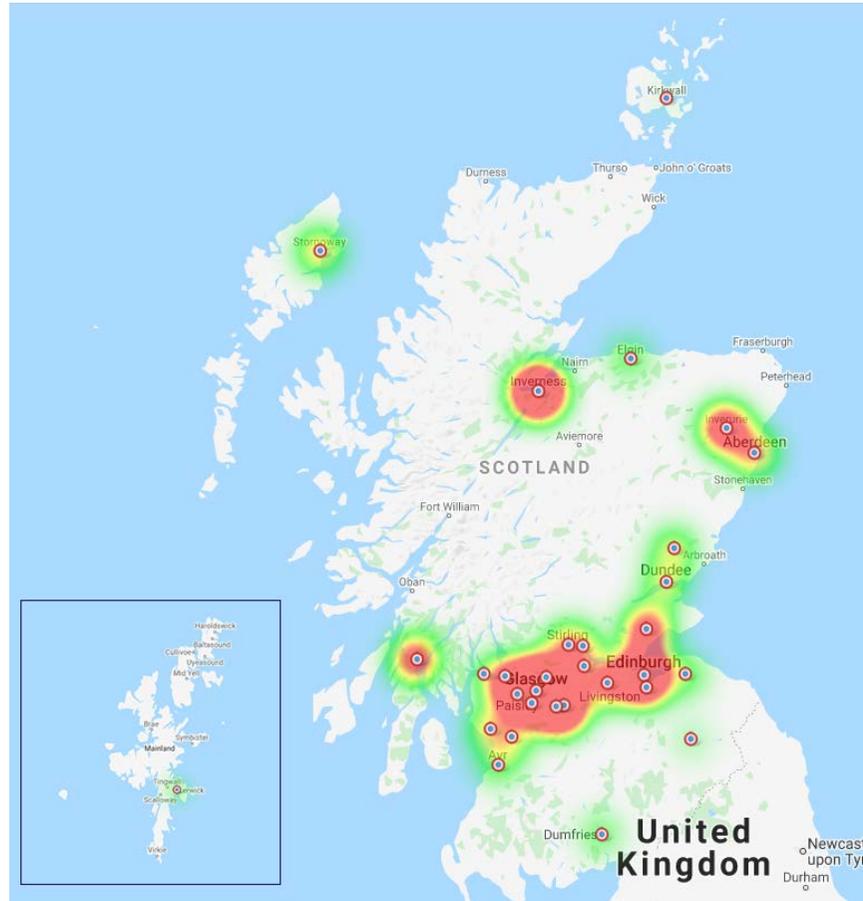


Figure 5

Location breakdown;

Aberdeen City - 19	Orkney - 2
Aberdeenshire - 32	Perth & Kinross - 12
Angus - 12	Renfrewshire - 21
Argyll & Bute - 27	Scottish Borders - 4
Edinburgh - 56	Shetland - 3
Clackmannanshire - 7	South Ayrshire - 8
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - 16	South Lanarkshire - 28
Dumfries & Galloway - 7	Stirling - 15
Dundee - 12	West Dunbartonshire - 15
East Ayrshire - 11	West Lothian - 20
East Dunbartonshire - 21	No data* - 78
East Lothian - 9	Outside Scotland - 12
East Renfrewshire - 5	
Falkirk - 8	
Fife - 27	
Glasgow - 74	
Highland - 62	
Inverclyde - 4	
Midlothian - 6	
Moray - 8	
North Ayrshire - 12	
North Lanarkshire - 32	

*In some cases, the email address used by the respondent was not linked to their record within the database or no location data was available on their record.

The pattern shows a reasonably widespread geographical location across Scotland of those who indicated a potential interest in teaching in the medium of Gaelic. Although, as expected, the bulk of respondents are located in the Central Belt, it is heartening to see sizeable numbers in more rural areas such as Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Argyll and Bute and Highland where Gaelic already has a foothold.

3 Conclusion

The overall analysis shows the appetite teachers have in teaching Gaelic in some capacity.

Issues identified in preventing this are:

- ❖ lack of access to funding; and
- ❖ lack of training opportunities.

Location-wise, there is much interest in the Central Belt whereas there is a continued interest in places such as, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Argyll and Bute and Highland.

Most popular solutions to resolve this are:

- ❖ flexibility of training location; and
- ❖ mode of delivery.

The pandemic, however, has amplified the use of technology in teaching and should be a serious consideration for this cause, therefore where and how teachers can access is essential in helping those who want to teach Gaelic.

4 Next steps

Following the conclusions drawn from this survey, GTC Scotland has proposed the following next steps to promote Gaelic in teaching.

- ❖ Raw data of this survey to be made available to any interested parties.
- ❖ Consider what funding could be made available.
- ❖ Collaboration for live and recorded learning sessions. GTC Scotland has the facility to host live webinars for up to 500 attendees and publish recordings.
- ❖ The Faster Rate of Progress group to consider other possible support.

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Comhairle Choitcheann Teagaisg na h-Alba

The General Teaching Council for Scotland is the independent professional body which maintains and enhances teaching standards and promotes and regulates the teaching profession in Scotland. We strive to be a world leader in professional education issues.

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