Homes4Life

Certified smart and integrated living environments for ageing well

D5.7 – Homes4Life Stakeholders Community of Interest (final report)

Deliverable D5.7		
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Executive Summary

The Homes4Life "Community of Interest" (CoI) is a network of key stakeholders interested in following the developments of the project and as such, interested in topics at the crossroads of ageing, housing and the age-friendliness of the built environments. The successful delivery and take-up of the project productions strongly depended on the capacity of project partners to engage with a representative range of stakeholders to be involved for the adoption of an age-friendly approach to housing. This holds particularly true for the design and adoption of the Homes4Life Certification Scheme, main output of the project, which is subject of a dedicated exploitation scheme targeting specific categories of stakeholders (deliverable D5.2).

In that context, the Community of Interest played a crucial role, by allowing for the consortium both to communicate on the project results and to obtain stakeholders' inputs. These stakeholders range from public authorities to construction and industrial experts, technologists, providers of personal household services and representatives of inhabitants and older adults – be they owners or tenants. At the end of the project, after 27 months, the Community of Interest counts 191 individual members from 28 different countries – mainly in Europe. According to the registration form, a large majority of those members wishes to be informed about the project progress and achievements. Nearly half of them are willing to contribute to the development of the Certification Scheme; 38% are interested to test it. In addition, the exchanges with the CoI confirmed that a large majority adhere to the vision and the approach followed by the Homes4Life project.

Members of the Community of Interest had the possibility to contribute to the project and bring external expertise. This has been the case for instance during:
- the 1st stakeholder workshop organised in Brussels in June 2019
- the 3 webinars organised between June and November 2020
- an open consultation on the taxonomy & KPIs between December 2020 and February 2021
- the final conference in January 2021

The Community of Interest will be maintained after the end of the project through the exploitation plan of the Certification Scheme. Such a Community will be critical after the end of the project to foster the uptake of the Certification Scheme and to be able to identify and contact future demo cases or buyers.

The Community of Interest has been initiated by communicating about Homes4Life among all the partners networks. It kept growing thanks to a snowball effect, as more and more stakeholders heard about the project, e.g. during conferences and events attended by the partners. Also, throughout the project, the consortium kept informed the Community of Interest about the work carried out, the deliverables published, the events organised, etc.

Acronyms and abbreviations

CoI	Community of Interest
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CS	Certification Scheme
EC	European Commission
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
PO	Project Officer
WP	Work Package

1 Introduction

1.1 Aims and objectives

This deliverable aims at describing the "Community of Interest" (CoI) that has been created within the European project Homes4Life, which global objective is to propose an inspirational and realistic long-term vision and working taxonomy of the needs and requirements for the development of age-friendly living environments. As a result, the project has also developed a new European Certification Scheme (CS) on age-friendly housing. The present deliverable is part of Task 5.1 that lasted the whole duration of the project (December 2018 – November 2020, plus 3 months extension until February 2021).

The role of the CoI, the way it is managed, how it has developed, its current status and the plans to maintain the community alive after the project will be presented here.

This document is mainly meant for the Project Officer (PO) and the Reviewers of the project set by the European Commission (EC), but also for the partners of the project. They can refer to it in case of any doubt on the aims and means of the dissemination network operations.

1.2 Relations to other activities in the project

The network created with the CoI is strongly connected to all activities of the project, as it has been used as the main means of dissemination for the consortium's findings, documents or events. Relevant stakeholders have been identified (through the continuous growth of the network) and consulted (though general or targeted dissemination actions). The impact of the project and the uptake of its CS is therefore linked to the strength and dynamism of this community.

1.3 Report structure

This document will first describe the grounds and role of the CoI. We will then precise how it is managed and structured, before we present its status at the end of the project (number of members, evolution, main topics of interest, etc.). We will also remind how the consortiums has used the CoI throughout the project.

2 Grounds for the Community of Interest

2.1 Purpose of the Community of Interest

The main output of the project is a new European CS, based on an inspirational and realistic long-term vision of people's needs and requirements in a holistic life-course approach and help develop better living environments integrating construction and digital solutions where this is beneficial. The successful design and then implementation of the CS partly relied on an efficient and strategic dissemination (see deliverable D5.8 – "Dissemination and Communication Plan, activity and performance report"). The CoI played and will still play this role, by enabling both to communicate on the project results and to obtain user/stakeholder inputs.

- A network of key stakeholders

The Homes4Life CoI brings together and structures a network of stakeholders across Europe that work or are interested in the age-friendliness of our cities and buildings. Those persons, together with the organisations they represent, have very different profiles and come from the public, not-for-profit, and for-profit private sectors. They might be as well potential beneficiaries, potential early-adopters of the Homes4Life CS, replicators, users, etc. Those stakeholders wanted to keep informed and to participate in the project and the work carried out by the consortium.

- A mean of dissemination

The CoI enabled the consortium to have a direct access to the dissemination targets of the project. Updates about the work carried out, documents published, participation to or organisations of events by partners, etc. were shared with the CoI. This, together with the Homes4Life Twitter account[1] and website[2], in addition to direct exchanges with stakeholders for instance within the framework of the pilot testing sites, ensured a good level of transparency of the activities carried out by the consortium and allowed for the promotion of the project outputs. The communication was not restricted to information about the CS only, but to all activities and news relating to age-friendly housing.

- A way to contribute and expend the expertise

The variety of this set of stakeholders gave the possibility to have an integral and transversal approach of how to tackle the question of where and how the society wants to grow older. By subscribing to the CoI, stakeholders got the opportunity to contribute to the

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[1] https://twitter.com/Homes4LifeH2020

[2] http://www.homes4life.eu/

Homes4Life CS development, through e.g. project events, external stakeholder events where consortium members were present, calls for inputs or comments on specific deliverables, or the recruitment of pilot testing sites. The consortium could rely on this network to widen its range of expertise, since it enabled to call for complementary external competences among relevant networks at regional, national and European levels. It was also useful to hear about good practices and local initiatives through this means.

2.2 Development of the CoI and relation to other project activities

This community has been created at the very beginning of the project and kept expanding using a snowball approach, especially thanks to the contacts established by the project partners from the beginning of the project. The networks were initially based on known persons or organisations (e.g. the members of the Expert Board), and kept growing by meeting people during conferences, presentations, other collaborations on related topics, etc.

All Homes4Life partners have advertised about the CoI within their networks through direct emails, newsletters, articles on their webpages and/or social media accounts. Each time partners presented the project during a conference or another kind of event, they advertise about it as well. Before and after Homes4Life events, registered people and attendees were invited to join the CoI.

The development, implementation, monitoring and exploitation of the stakeholder's Community of Interest is closely intertwined with the activities conducted in other Work Packages (WP) of the project:

- Preliminary research work and stakeholder workshop

On June 11, 2019, the Homes4Life partners organised their first stakeholder workshop in Brussels (see the resulting article[3] and deliverable D2.2). It aimed at presenting the project, what had been achieved by then and the next steps. This first stakeholder gathering was especially designed to collect meaningful input from the audience on ongoing activities, in particular: the preliminary desktop research informing the project's vision and the taxonomy underpinning the CS.

The communication about the workshop, from March to June 2019, was closely linked to the early developments of the CoI since the target audiences for the workshop and the CoI were the same. Therefore, many of the registrations to the CoI occurred in the months preceding the workshop (see 4.1). The CoI was therefore useful to involve stakeholders – apart from the ones in the Expert Board – in this workshop.

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[3] http://www.homes4life.eu/2019/06/20/successful-homes4life-stakeholder-workshop-in-brussels-thank-you

During the workshop, the programme was mostly focused on the WP2. It was indeed in this WP that most of the work had been carried out so far. Nevertheless, the inputs collected during the workshop were in fact a basis for WP3 and to a certain extent to WP4. The comments on the working Taxonomy (T2.4) link directly to Task 3.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPI) framework, and the inputs from the stakeholders confirmed the way forward. The partners especially understood that the developments must be kept:

- Simple to make it accessible to all the different stakeholders
- Adaptable to different building typologies
- Inclusive to consider all the stakeholders involved.

These points are crucial for the identification of the indicators that will be included in WP4 Certification Scheme and for the definition of the Homes4Life functional brief (T3.4). During the workshop were also identified by the attendees different ongoing projects and initiatives that have been useful for tasks T3.2 and T3.3.

- Homes4Life Certification Scheme

Within WP4, the CoI has been used to obtain feedbacks on the Homes4Life CS. Comments and proposals of the CoI members have been studied by the consortium (especially Certivéa and Tecnalia) and considered in the final version of the CS when relevant. For this purpose, two webinars have been organised by the consortium:

- "Homes4Life Certification Scheme Webinar", 9 July, 2020[4]: the taxonomy was first presented, followed by an introduction to the principles of the Homes4Life Certification Scheme and how it operates. Certivéa also introduced the testing of the Certification Scheme in a dozen of pilot sites across Europe. Then, participants had the opportunity to share their views on its strengths and weaknesses. The discussion focused in particular on the way the Certification would be promoted, who it mainly aimed and project Partners' expectations in terms of number of certified buildings to achieve.
- "Second Homes4Life Certification Scheme Webinar", 5 November, 2020[5]: the objective of this webinar was to interact as much as possible with the audience in order to collect their opinions and advice to improve the Certification. The last version of the CS was presented, together with the lessons learnt from the pilot sites. It was followed by fruitful exchanges with the audience.

With these inputs, together with the extensive research carried out by the Partners, the CS will be written ensuring that it is both understandable and applicable in practice by all stakeholders.

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[4] http://www.homes4life.eu/2020/07/17/homes4life-certification-scheme-webinar/

[5] http://www.homes4life.eu/2020/11/16/homes4life-certification-scheme-webinar-summary-recording-available/

- Taxonomy and KPIs-framework

The Homes4Life taxonomy and the KPI-framework of functional performance indicators for the age-friendly home environment are at the heart of the project. They translate the Homes4Life vision into structured, verifiable form and they are the basis on which the Homes4Life certification scheme has been built. They are considered as instruments that constantly evolve and that are developed in co-creation with end-users, policy makers, researchers and other stakeholders.

Therefore, between December 2020 and February 2021, the CoI was invited to provide feedback and ideas to help improving these instruments and increase their utility in promoting supportive housing for all. An open consultation has been created on the Homes4Life website[6], providing all the necessary information and documents.

- Sharing knowledge

In WP5, the CoI has been used for informing stakeholders and inviting them to participate and to contribute to some of the Homes4Life communication and dissemination events (Task 5.4). In particular, in addition to the previously mentioned webinars, the CoI has been invited to the webinar "Age-friendly housing in the context of the COVID-19 crisis" organised by the project partners together with other organisations on July 7, 2020[7]. The CoI has also of course been invited to attend and contribute to the Homes4Life final event (D5.6) on January 29, 2021[8].

All public deliverables of the project have naturally been shared with the CoI, as soon as they were approved by the EC and made public on the project *website (NB: the deliverables submitted during the last part of the project will be approved by the EC only after the end of the project, but the project partners still commit to share them with the CoI as soon as possible)*. Feedbacks were welcome for the preparation of the next steps of the project. The CoI will be also provided with the Business Cases fiches developed in Tasks 5.2 and 5.3[9].

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[6] http://www.homes4life.eu/help-us-improve-the-homes4life-taxonomy-and-kpis/

[7] http://www.homes4life.eu/2020/07/07/age-friendly-housing-in-the-context-of-the-covid-19-crisis-webinar-report/

[8] http://www.homes4life.eu/2021/01/29/watch-again-our-homes4life-final-conference/

[9] Also published on the Homes4Life website: http://www.homes4life.eu/pilots/

3   Management of the Community of Interest

3.1   Web service hosting the CoI

Registration to the CoI is possible via the website of the Homes4Life project[10]. The registration form can be found in the Appendix 1 of the present document. The Homes4Life CRM (Customer Relationship Management) is implemented through Mailchimp[11], a marketing platform for small businesses which provides products and services that empower those businesses to find more customers. This Mailchimp platform serves both to store and structure the list of registered people and to communicate with them, through the creation of designed emails (so called "campaigns).

3.2   Structure of the CoI

When registering to the CoI, subscribers are asked to inform which specific topics they are interested in (see Appendix 1):

- Ageing
- Construction, buildings and living environments
- Information and Communication Technologies
- Certifications
- Sustainability

Subscribers are also asked to mention their expectations:

- Be informed about the project progress and achievements
- Contribute to the certification scheme development
- Test the future certification scheme

These fields globally aim at assessing what the subscribers can bring to Homes4Life and what they can potentially exploit from the project findings. The consortium can map the different fields of expertise gathered within the CoI and understand which sectors seem particularly interested by the development of a CS related to age-friendly housing. Also, the consortium can design better its communication campaigns, by targeting specific subscribers depending on the information to be disseminated.

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[10] http://www.homes4life.eu/community-of-interest/
[11] www.mailchimp.com

3.3 Data security and GDPR

The CRM used for Homes4Life CoI – Mailchimp – has been designed to minimise the use of data to the ones strictly necessary for the purpose of the project. The management of data through Mailchimp is fully compliant with the latest legislation for the protection of personal data inside and outside the EU[12] on the basis of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

Besides the interests and expectations of the subscribers (see section 3.2), the following information is gathered and stored for each member of the Community of Interest:

- Email address
- First name
- Last name
- Organisation

This information is not shared with anyone outside the consortium. In addition, it is possible to unsubscribe at any time by clicking on a link in the footer of emails issued by the project.

The privacy policy of the project is accessible on the website[13]. This Privacy Policy has been generated by the Privacy Policy Generator of the DGD (the External DPO was developed in cooperation with German Lawyers from WILDE BEUGER SOLMECKE, Cologne). Further information on the data security is available in deliverables D6.1 and D6.2.

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[12] https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/data-protection_en

[13] http://www.homes4life.eu/privacypolicy/

4 Status and future of the CoI

4.1 Registered persons

The CoI gathers 191 members as of February 19, 2021. In addition, 3 persons unsubscribed and 6 have been "cleaned" by MailChimp (email addresses that were not in use anymore).

This figure is significantly below the initial objectives set by the consortium (more than 700 at the end of the project). This situation can be explained by different parameters:

- Several members of the CoI are e.g. associations, themselves representing a number of stakeholders and organisations: all these stakeholders and organisations anyway receive the information about the Homes4Life project via this "mother" association. Therefore, they might not have seen the added value to register to the CoI. This is for instance the case with Partners of the Consortium like ECTP (140+ member organisations), AGE Platform Europe (100+ member organisation) and Eurocarers (70+ member organisations).
- The pandemic has significantly impacted the development of planned communication and dissemination activities since early 2020. Several presential workshops or presentations were supposed to take place but have been replaced by online events. Such format does not enable all the usual networking and significantly limits the impact of an event, for instance in the subscription to a community.
- People and organisation might already be subscribed to many online communities and newsletters, in particular since the beginning of the pandemic. This might have created a certain effect of rejection towards subscribing to "yet another community".
- When registering to the CoI through the Homes4Life website, MailChimp automatically sends an email to the person to confirm his/her registration. This message might have gone the spams for some users, and the manager of the CoI could not be informed.

Looking at the way members have joined the community (Figure 4-1), we see that most members (93%) have registered through the dedicated online registration form available on the Homes4Life website[14]. In other few cases (7%), members have been added manually through the admin MailChimp interface: for these specific cases, an explicit consent email has been obtained from each member and is being kept by the Homes4Life consortium to comply with GDPR regulation (see also section 3.3, as well as deliverable D6.1 for further information about GDPR implementation in Homes4Life).

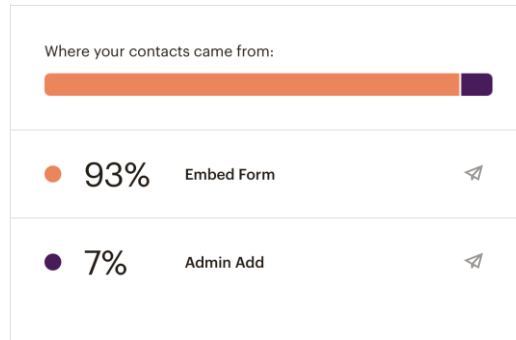[14] http://www.homes4life.eu/community-of-interest

FIGURE 4-1: CoI MEMBERS' REGISTRATION METHOD

A growth peak of the Community has been observed at the beginning of the project in February 2020, in particular because all organisations which had signed Letters of Support during the Homes4Life proposal phase have been invited to join the CoI, as well as close relevant networks of Homes4Life partners organisations. Since then, a steady growth of the Community can be observed (Figure 4-2 and Figure 4-3).
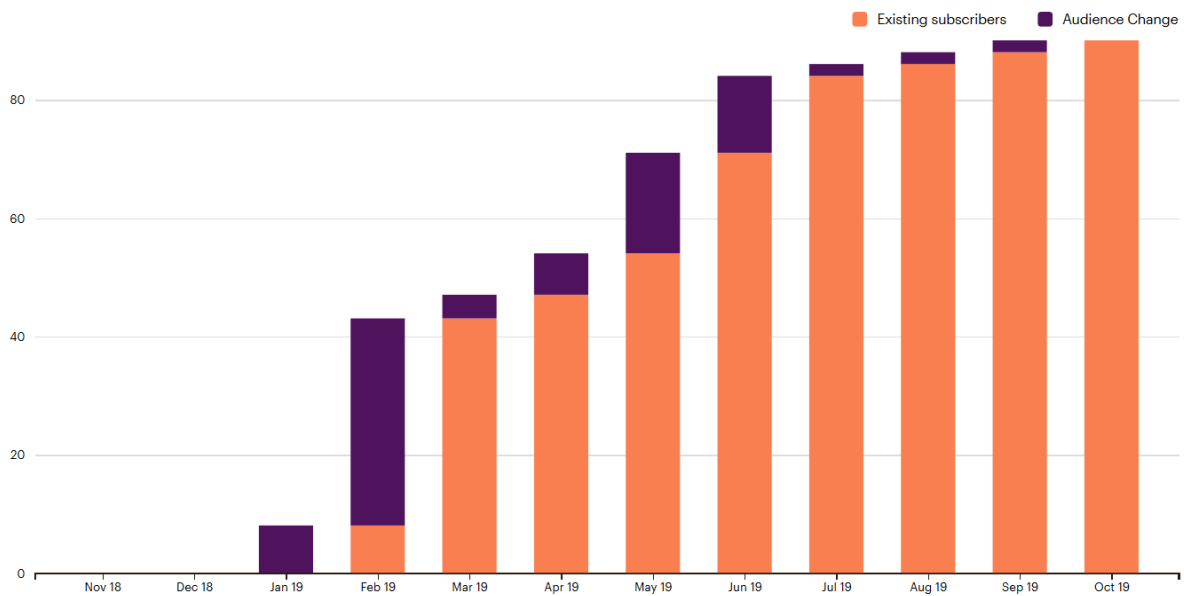

FIGURE 4-2: HOMES4LIFE CoI GROWTH DURING THE FIRST 12 MONTHS OF THE PROJECT
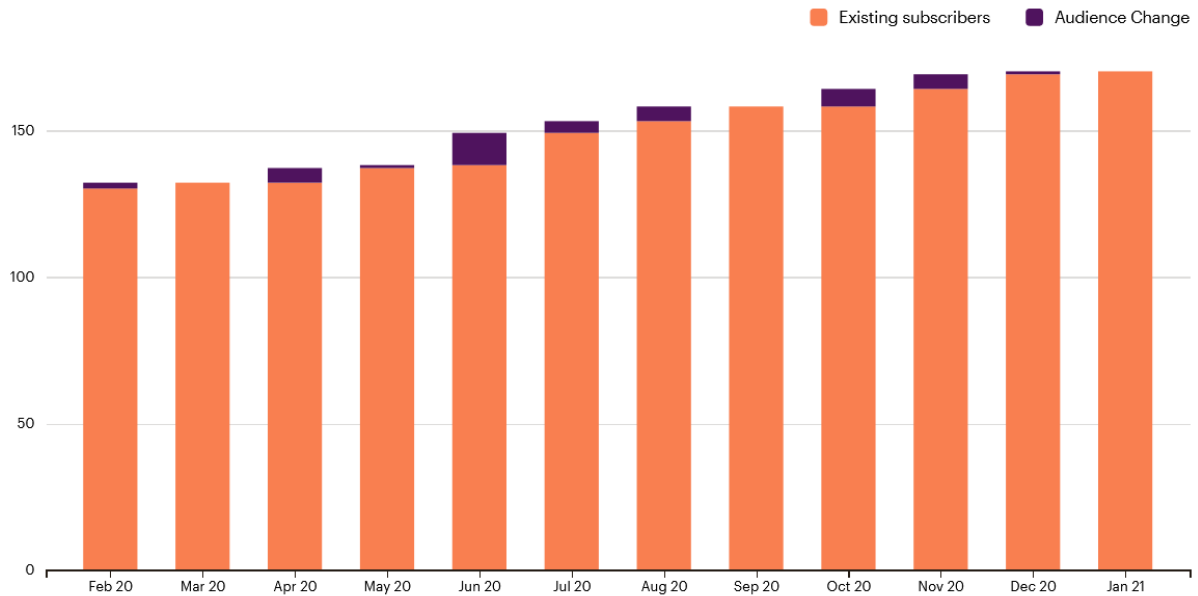
FIGURE 4-3: HOMES4LIFE COI GROWTH DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS OF THE PROJECT

In terms of location, CoI members cover 28 countries and are primarily from Spain, Belgium, Italy and France, which reflects the Homes4Life consortium composition (Figure 4-4).

Top locations

Other		24.6%
🇪🇸	Spain	17.1%
🇧🇪	Belgium	12.8%
🇮🇹	Italy	12.8%
🇫🇷	France	11.2%

FIGURE 4-4: HOMES4LIFE COI MEMBERS LOCATION

There is an interesting diversity in terms of type of organisation registered to the CoI (Figure 4-5): the largest share is represented by industrial organisations (27% - this includes both large industrial organisations and SMEs), followed by Associations (20%), universities (16%), local and public authorities (14%), Research organisations (11%), and other type of members (12% - e.g. private individuals, unknown, etc.).
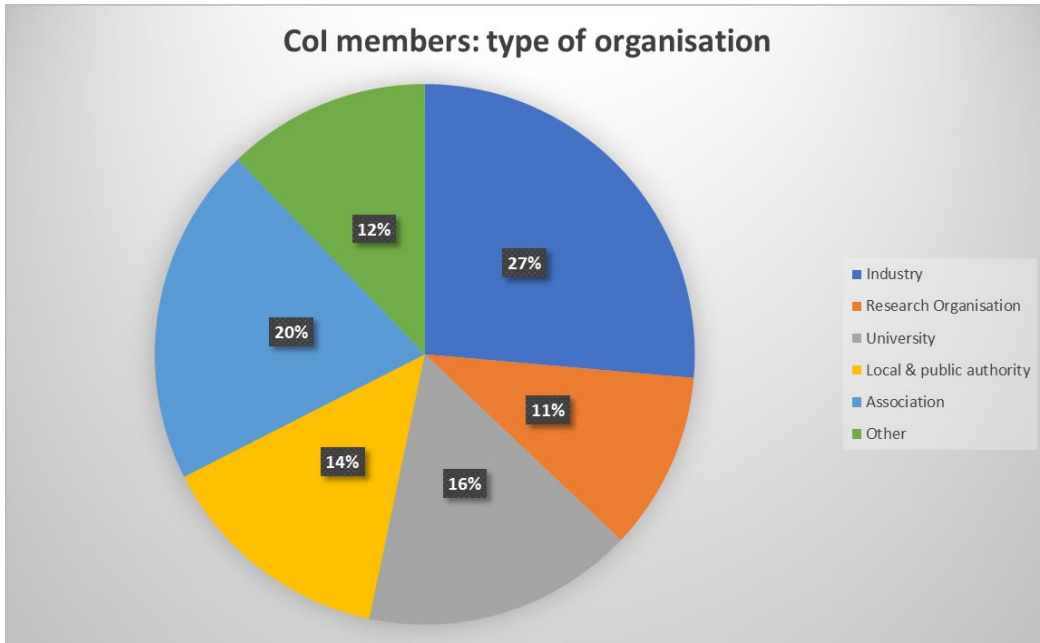
FIGURE 4-5: HOMES4LIFE COI MEMBERS - TYPE OF ORGANISATIONS

4.2 Interests and expectations of registered members

Within the online CoI registration form, members can select their main interests among 5 options as well as select their main expectations among 3 options: multiple choices are possible for each criterion. The main interest of CoI members relates to Ageing, followed by Construction, buildings and living environments, then Sustainability, ICT and finally Certifications (see Figure 4-6).
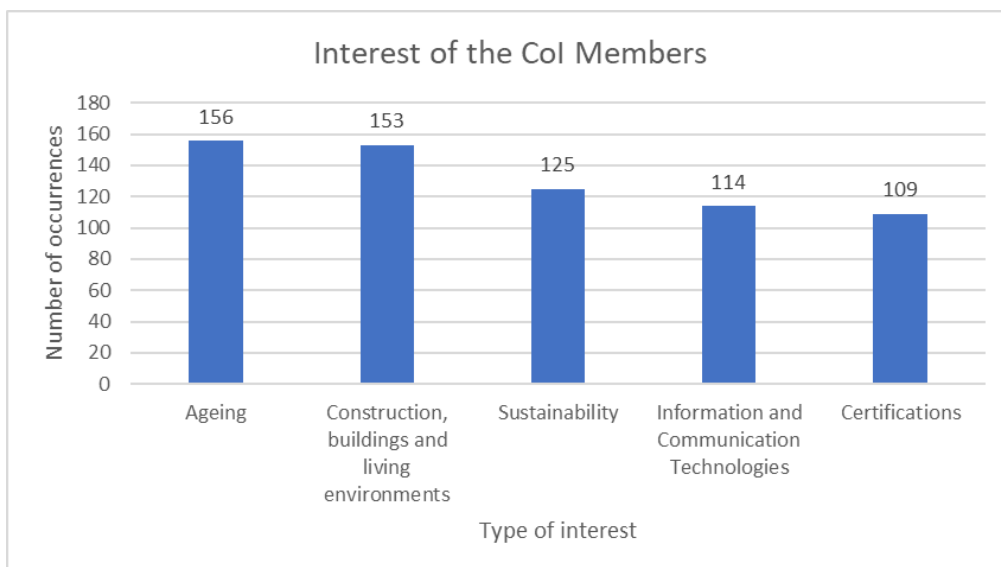

FIGURE 4-6: HOMES4LIFE INTERESTS OF THE COI MEMBERS

In terms of expectations (see Figure 4-7), a large majority of members is interested to be informed about the project progress and achievements. Nearly half of the members (88 members) are willing to contribute to the certification scheme development. Eventually, 73 members have ticked the option which indicates that they are interested in testing the future Homes4Life CS.
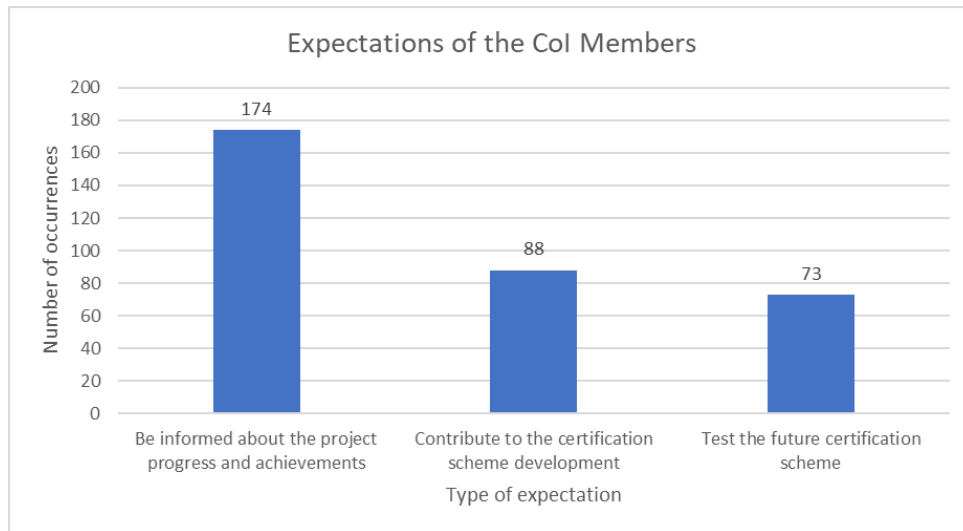

FIGURE 4-7: HOMES4LIFE EXPECTATIONS OF THE CoI MEMBERS

MailChimp can be used both for the CoI management and also for direct interaction with CoI members through the newsletters' edition module. CoI members' engagement with the emails is measured and reported in Figure 4-8. 42% of the CoI members often open and click on the emails sent.
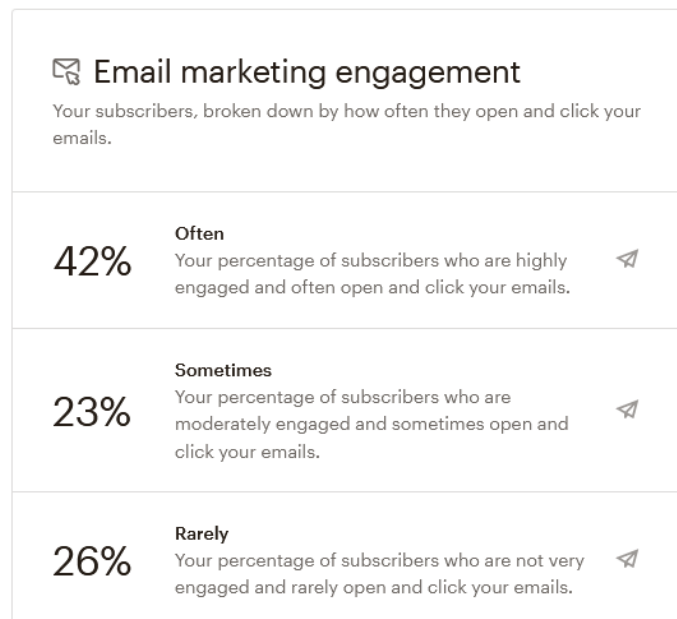

FIGURE 4-8: HOMES4LIFE CoI EMAIL ENGAGEMENT

4.3 Future of the CoI

Homes4Life consortium wishes to maintain this new network of key stakeholders active after the end of the project, i.e. after February 2021, so as to keep the momentum created on the different topics covered by the project.

Firstly, the CoI has been invited to sign a Commitment to invest in and/or to support age-friendly housing (through D4.6's Letters of Commitment). Then, the consortium has defined a post-project exploitation plan for the Homes4Life Certification Scheme, as well as for the working Taxonomy and the KPI framework which underpin it. It includes, among others, actions and responsibilities for the management of the Certification, for its marketing and sales, for the delivery of training sessions and for its on-site implementation. All this exploitation plan in described in the deliverable D5.2.

The CoI as such will disappear: it was indeed designed to last only for the duration of the Homes4Life project (as mentioned in the terms agreed by any subscriber). For this reason, within the exploitation framework, the members of the CoI will be invited to join another mailing-list or similar tool by the "advisory committee" of the Certification Scheme. This new network will be used to communicate on the future developments of the Certification and more globally speaking on policy issues that are core to Homes4Life activities. This should foster the uptake of the Certification, increase knowledge and enable to identify and contact future demo cases or future buyers.

In addition, the CoI will be invited to join two other initiatives that relate to Homes4Life's topics and that should enable to keep interested stakeholders active, in view of future requests or calls for expertise within the Homes4Life Certification exploitation activities:

- **ECHAlliance**: the European Connected Health Alliance is the Global Health Connector for Digital Health, facilitating multi-stakeholder connections around ecosystems, driving sustainable change and disruption in the delivery of health and social care. It is in particular launching a Thematic Innovation Ecosystem targeting housing and the built environment, that shall become a permanent place where to host exchanges on those topics.
https://echalliance.com/membership/become-a-member/

- **NET4Age-Friendly:** this COST Actions aims at establishing an international and interdisciplinary network of researchers from all sectors to foster awareness, and to support the creation and implementation of smart, healthy indoor and outdoor environments for present and future generations. It also serves the promotion of what is called "Smart Healthy Age-friendly Environments" (SHAFE). NET4Age-Friendly further aims to overcome fragmentation and critical gaps at both conceptual and pragmatic innovation level on responsive, age-friendly and sustainable environments in order to address the research-policy future requirements of Europe. The main approach of NET4Age-Friendly is the establishment of new local or regional ecosystems or by expanding existing ones in each European COST country involved, to work on health and wellbeing in an age-friendly digital world. https://www.net4age.eu/what-net4age-friendly

5 Conclusions

Dissemination is a key element in the exploitation of the Homes4Life results and Certification Scheme. The ongoing and future management of Community of Interest described in this document lays the foundation for a successful implementation. It has enabled stakeholders and final users to become aware of the project and understand its aims and major productions. The CoI was linked to all WPs, as it served both to communicate on the work carried out and to receive useful inputs or expertise.

The CoI was in particular invited to the different workshops and webinars organised by the Consortium to give their opinion e.g. on the last versions of the CS and on the taxonomy. The CoI also had the possibility to contribute to the definition of the taxonomy and of its KPI through an open online consultation.

After 27 months, the CoI counts 191 members. 28 countries are covered and several sectors are represented: industry (large companies & SMEs), research organisations, local & public authorities, universities, associations, independent individuals, etc. The main interest of the CoI members relates to Ageing, followed by Construction, buildings and living environments, then Sustainability, ICT and finally Certifications. They naturally mostly wish to be informed about the project progress and achievements and to contribute to the CS development. A significant part is also interested in testing the Homes4Life CS.

After the end of the project, in February 2021, the exploitation strategy plans to keep the CoI network alive, but through a different form (new mailing-list or similar tool) operated by the entity in charge of managing the exploitation activities (see deliverable D5.2). This new network will be used to communicate on the future developments of the Certification and more globally speaking on policy issues that are core to Homes4Life activities, so as to foster the uptake of the Certification, increase knowledge and enable to identify and contact future demo cases or future buyers. Some members of the CoI have already committed to invest in age-friendly housing through Letters of Commitment.

6 Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1: CoI registration form

Subscribe to our Homes4Life Community of Interest

* indicates required

Email Address *

First Name *

Last Name *

Organisation *

My interests

- ☐ Ageing
- ☐ Construction, buildings and living environments
- ☐ Information and Communication Technologies
- ☐ Certifications
- ☐ Sustainability

My expectations

- ☐ Be informed about the project progress and achievements
- ☐ Contribute to the certification scheme development
- ☐ Test the future certification scheme

Marketing Permissions

Please select all the ways you would like to hear from Homes4Life community managed by ECTP:

☐ **Email**

You can unsubscribe at any time by clicking the link in the footer of our emails. For information about our privacy practices, please read our privacy policy.

We use Mailchimp as our marketing platform. By clicking below to subscribe, you acknowledge that your information will be transferred to Mailchimp for processing. Learn more about Mailchimp's privacy practices here.

Subscribe

FIGURE 6-1: HOMES4LIFE COI REGISTRATION FORM