

# Homeshare International Research Advisory Group (HIRAG)

## *“Homeshare Business Models”* Survey results

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Homeshare International



**Homeshare**  
international  
promoting housing for help worldwide

# HIRAG

- Formed in 2013 to respond to need for robust evidence base for Homeshare
- Initially under Alan Hatton-Yeo as chair, succeeded by Mariano Sanchez
- Plan for a series of Fact Sheets for existing and planned homeshare programmes
- 1<sup>st</sup> to be on Business Models, so survey undertaken during 2015

# Business models survey

- Specifically for intergenerational living match-up services around the world
- Created on “SurveyMonkey” in English, Spanish, German, Italian and French
- Circulated widely, 44 responses
- Spain (9); UK (6); USA (7); Germany (6); France (3); Belgium (1); Italy (2); Netherlands (1); Switzerland (2); Australia (5); Austria (2)

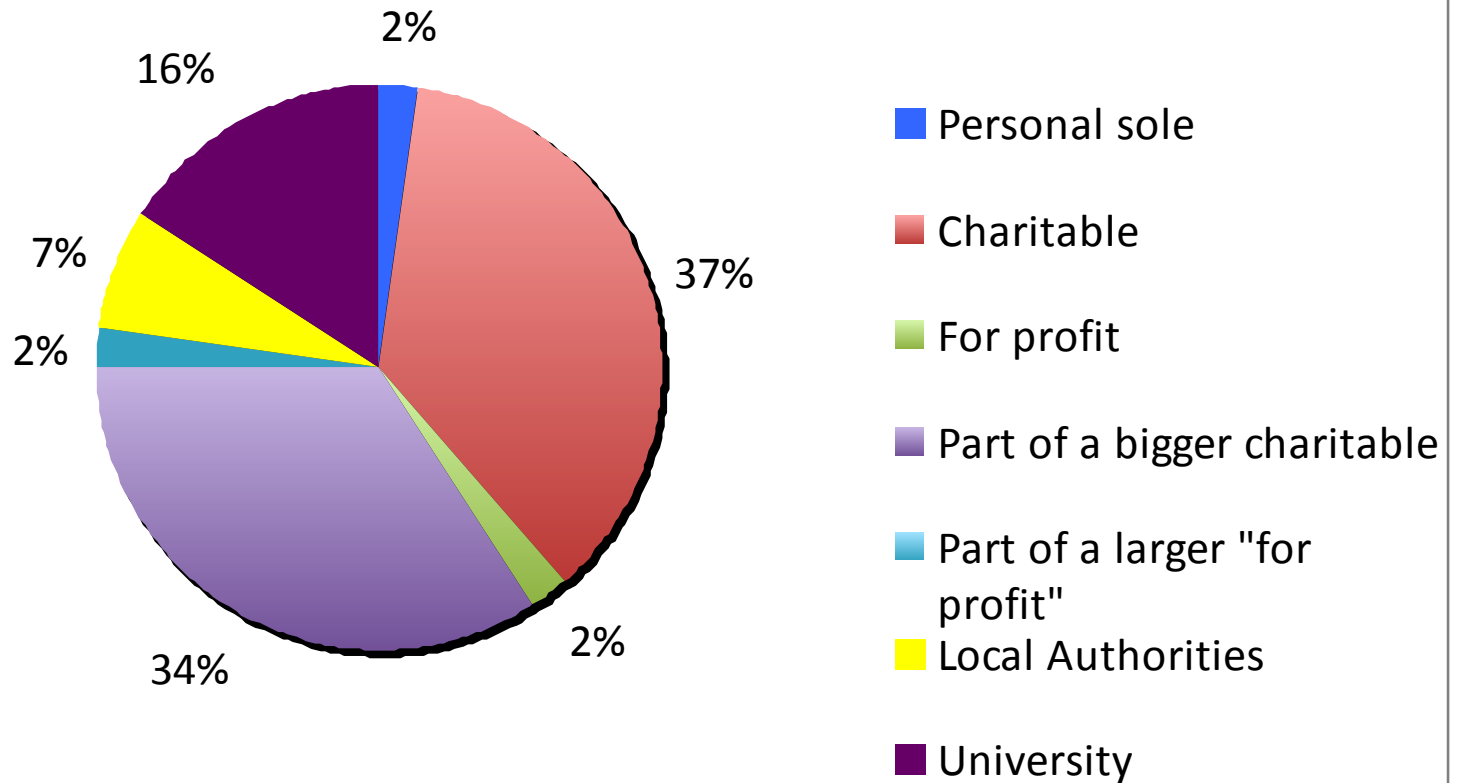
# Questions

- Type of business
- Geographical spread
- Staffing
- Householder profile
- Homesharer profile
- Fee levels
- Willingness to share documentation

# Learning points

- Programmes tend not to be *for profit* (2/44), however a range of models exist;
- Programmes work at local/community level rather than national;
- Most have paid staff; but few programmes levy charges to householders and/or homesharers;
- Clear willingness to share documentation;

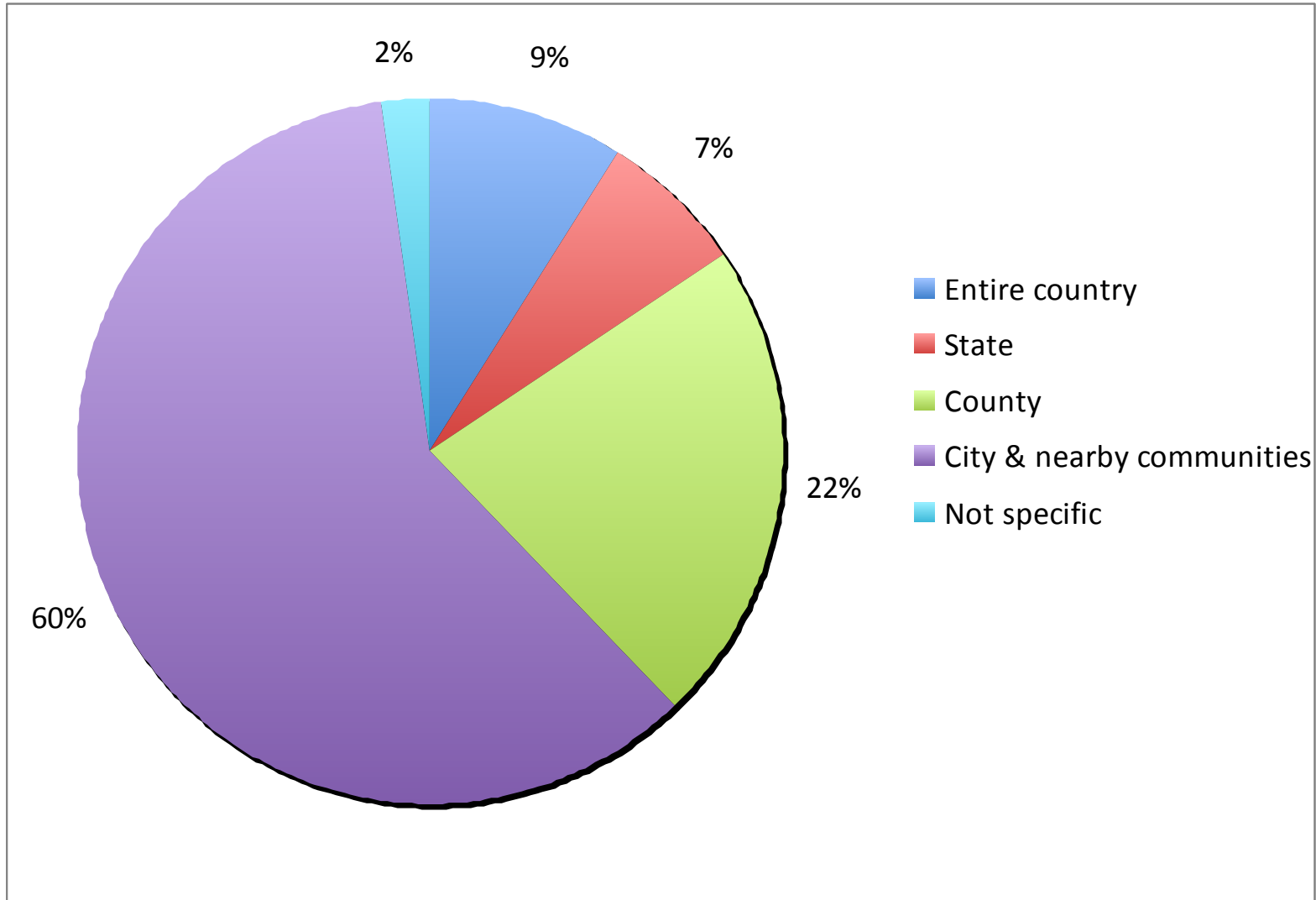
# Business Models



# Business Models

- Programmes are businesses, but vast majority non-profit.
- The charitable world has been analysed widely, but homeshare programmes deserve further attention.
- The charitable nature of homeshare could be seen as both friend and foe (catalyst and inhibitor).
- National context influential in selection of operational formats (e.g. Spain programmes all run by universities)

# Geographical spread





# Geographical spread

- 60% serve a city/town and nearby communities
- 22% cover one county; 16% cover more than one county
- Only 9% cover entire country
- Worth exploring reasons for this local scope;
- Are there models which enable programmes to spread and grow organically?

# Staffing

- 1% of programmes are run exclusively by volunteers;
- 43% have paid staff supported by volunteers;
- 54% depend entirely on paid staff
- Programmes must generate funds, through fundraising or other means, to enable programmes to be sustainable.
- Strategies for fundraising and analysis of professional competencies of staff could be subjects of future research

# Householder profile

- Must be >65 in 24% of programmes
- Must be homeowners in 14% of programmes
- Must live alone in 21% of programmes
- Range of other requirements, e.g. relatively able-bodied; member of the Time Banking system in St Gallen; must be >75. Generally flexible.
- Need to consider criteria other than chronological age to qualify as householder; e.g. could the householder be the younger person in the match?

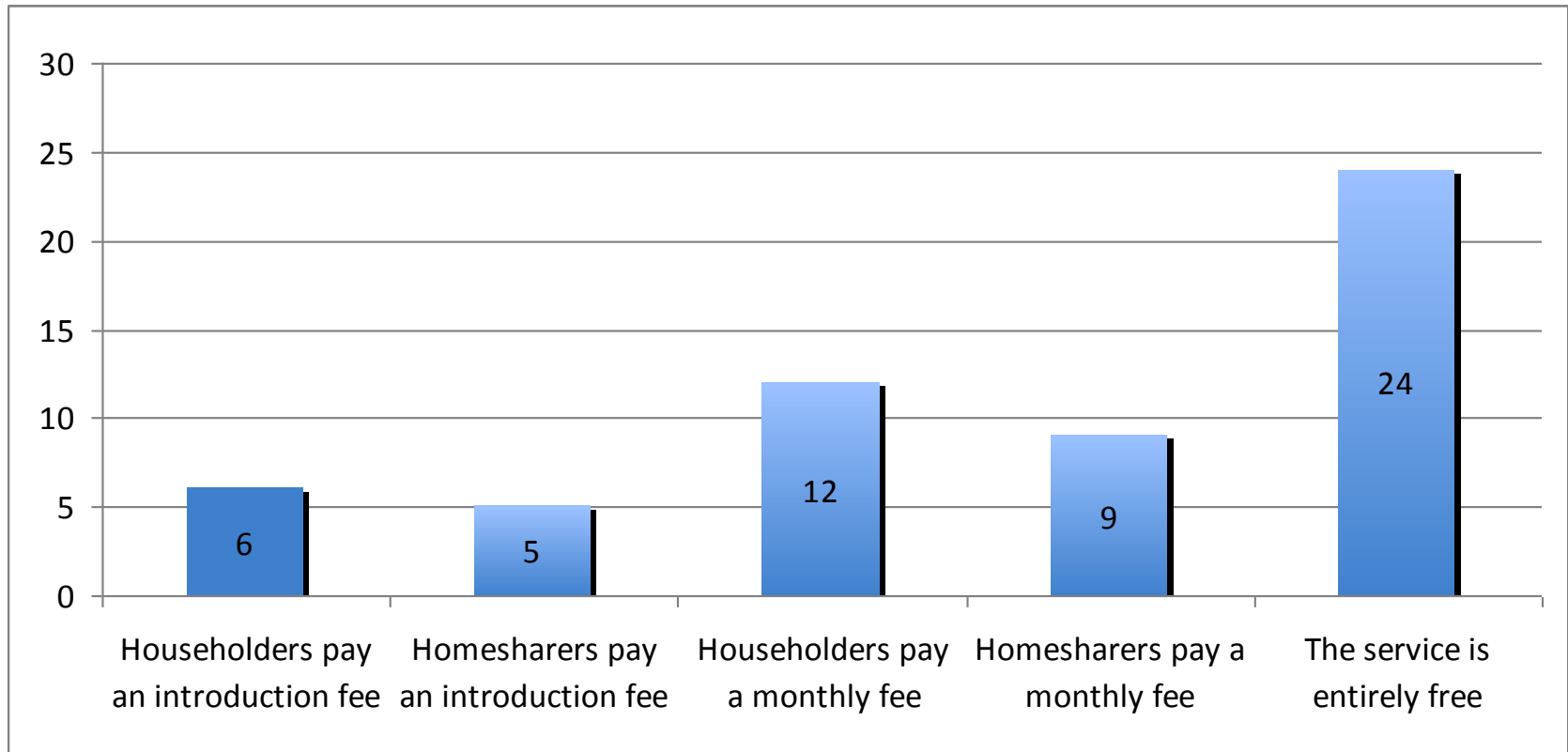
# Homesharer profile

- Homesharers must be >18 in 62% of programmes surveyed; >21 in 22%
- 40% programmes require them to be full-time registered students;
- 56% require them to sleep in the house most nights;
- 44% require them to stay for a minimum period
- Is there underlying reason for the need (or otherwise) to be full-time student? further research required to look at influence of changing profile of students.

# Fees and charges

- Over half offer the service free of charge
- Monthly fees by householders (26.6%) and homesharers (20%) and/or introduction fees are rare;
- Over half the programmes surveyed state they not financially self-sufficient
- Only 3 describe themselves as self-sufficient.

# Fees and charges



# Sustainability of programmes

- Consideration to be given to how programmes' sustainability could be strengthened;
- Currently dependent on external sources of funding, so precarious;
- Is the charitable model the most likely to succeed? Data shows a struggle between the altruistic approach and need for financial sustainability;
- Can lessons be learned from related sectors, e.g. housing, older people's services?
- If homeshare is to become a real movement, it must find pathways to launch viable programmes;

# Sharing Documentation

- 29/44 willing to share some documentation to help others who are starting or running a programme
- How best to collect this documentation, and make it available, while preserving copyright and limiting dissemination? HIRAG to consider.
- Consider an electronic “by invitation only” repository
- Access to this international documentation could pave way for further and more ambitious surveys



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