

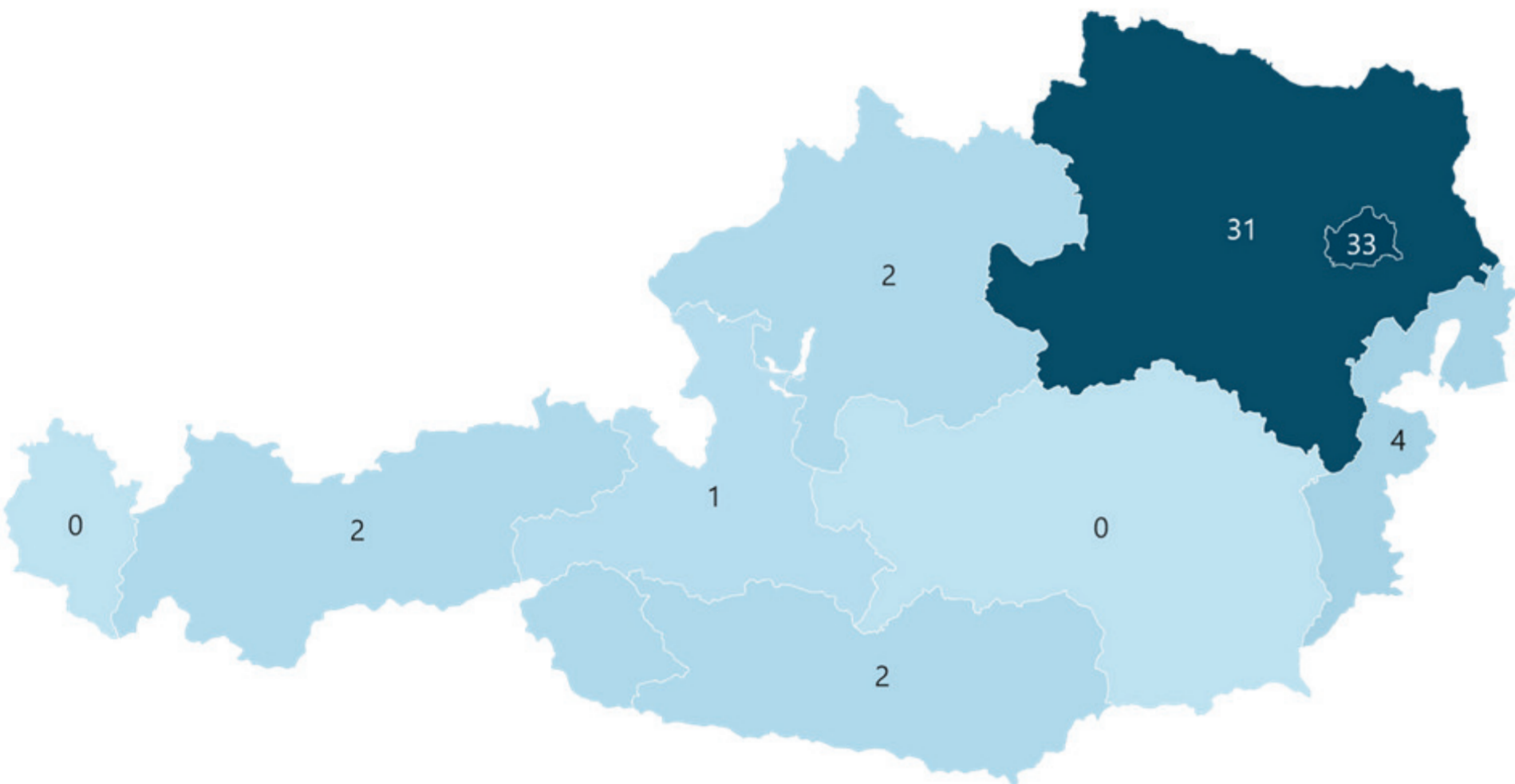
ALTERNATIVE FOOD NETWORKS IN AUSTRIA



Regional partner involvement

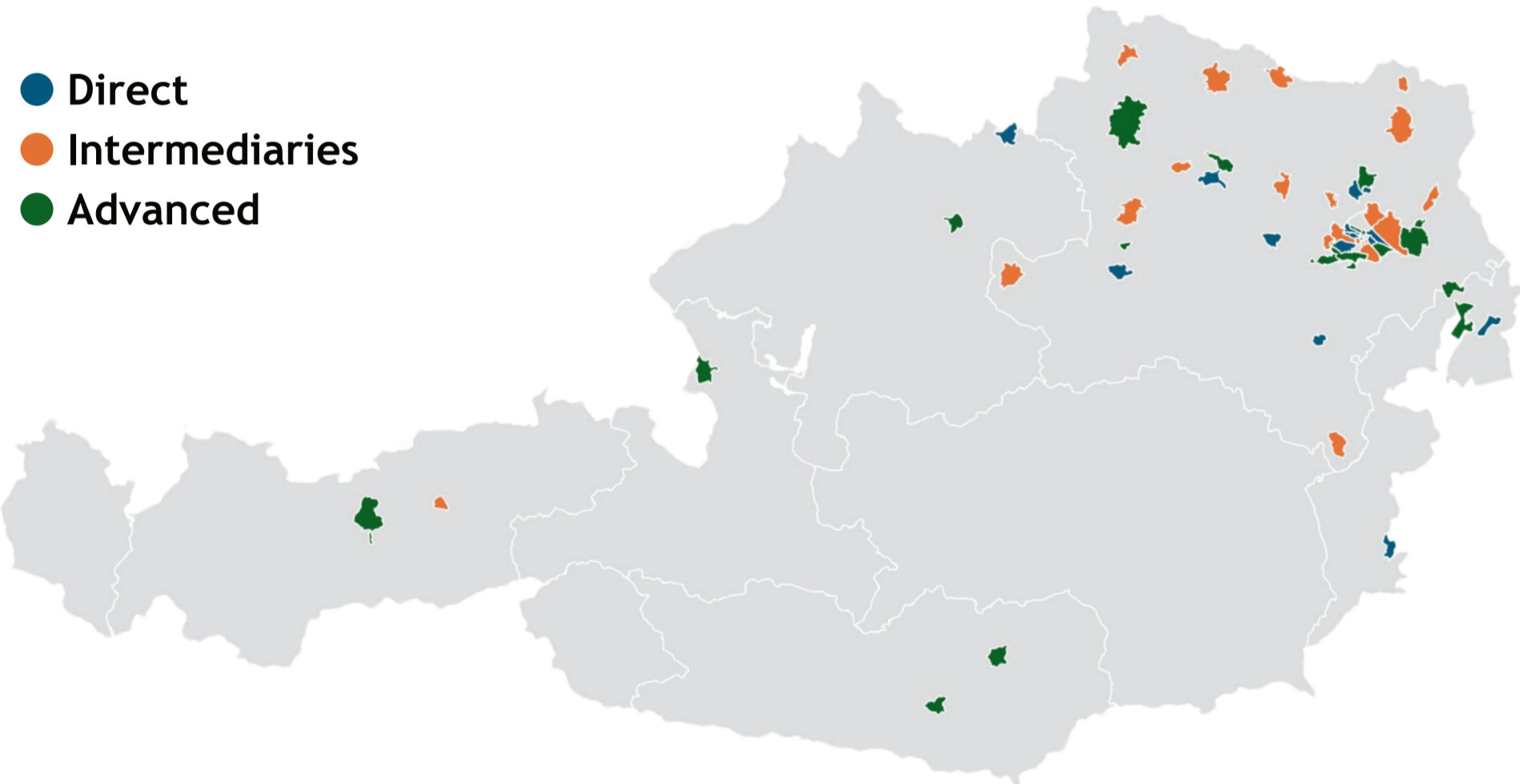


Geographical location

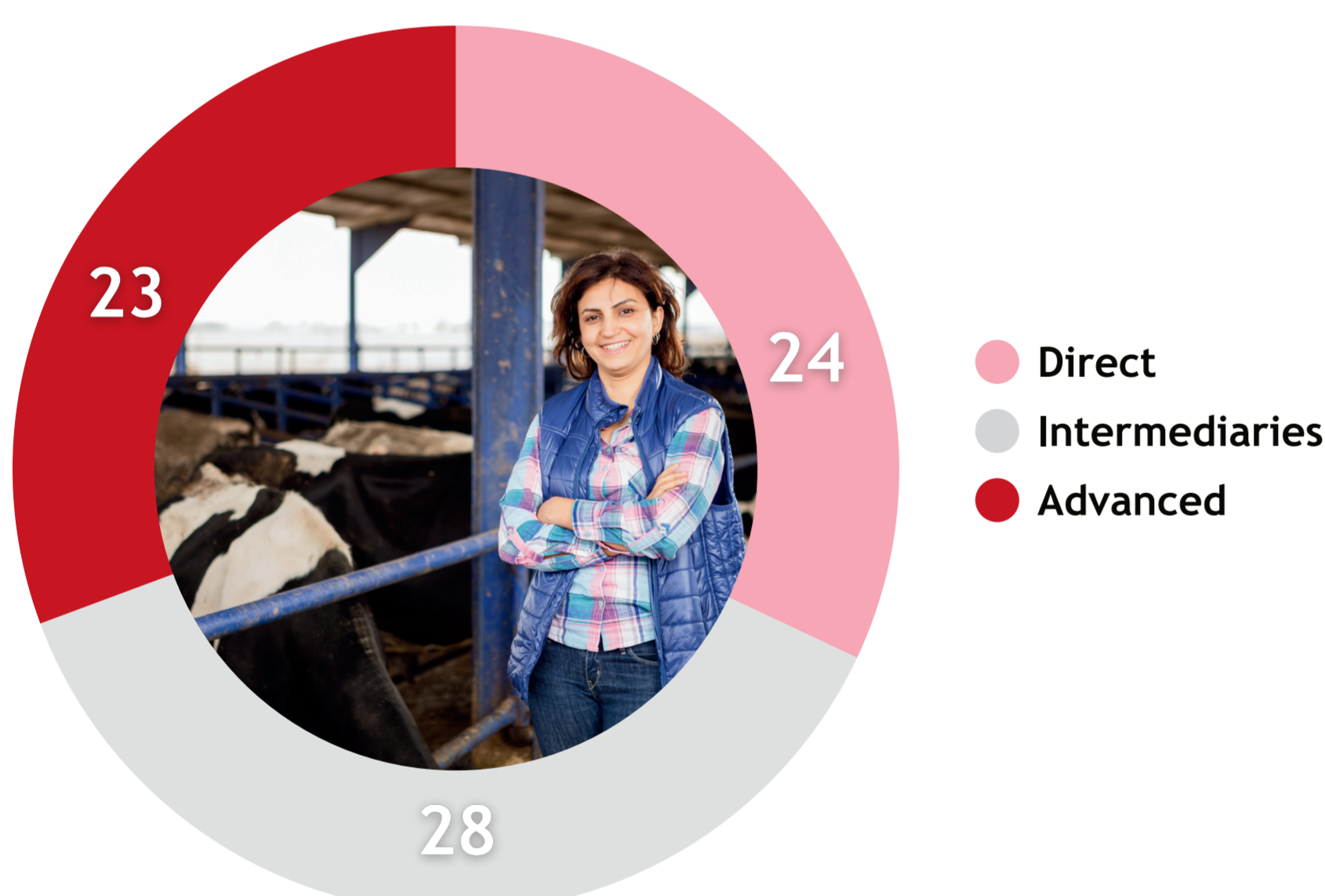


33 AFNs originate from **Vienna**, accompanied by 31 from **Lower Austria**, with an additional 4 emerging from **Burgenland**. Due to the large number of AFNs in Austria, the focus was placed mainly on the **Eastern region**.

AFNs' level of complexity



The research has identified **over 75 AFNs across Austria**. Among these, 24 have been identified as direct, 28 as intermediaries, and 23 as advanced.



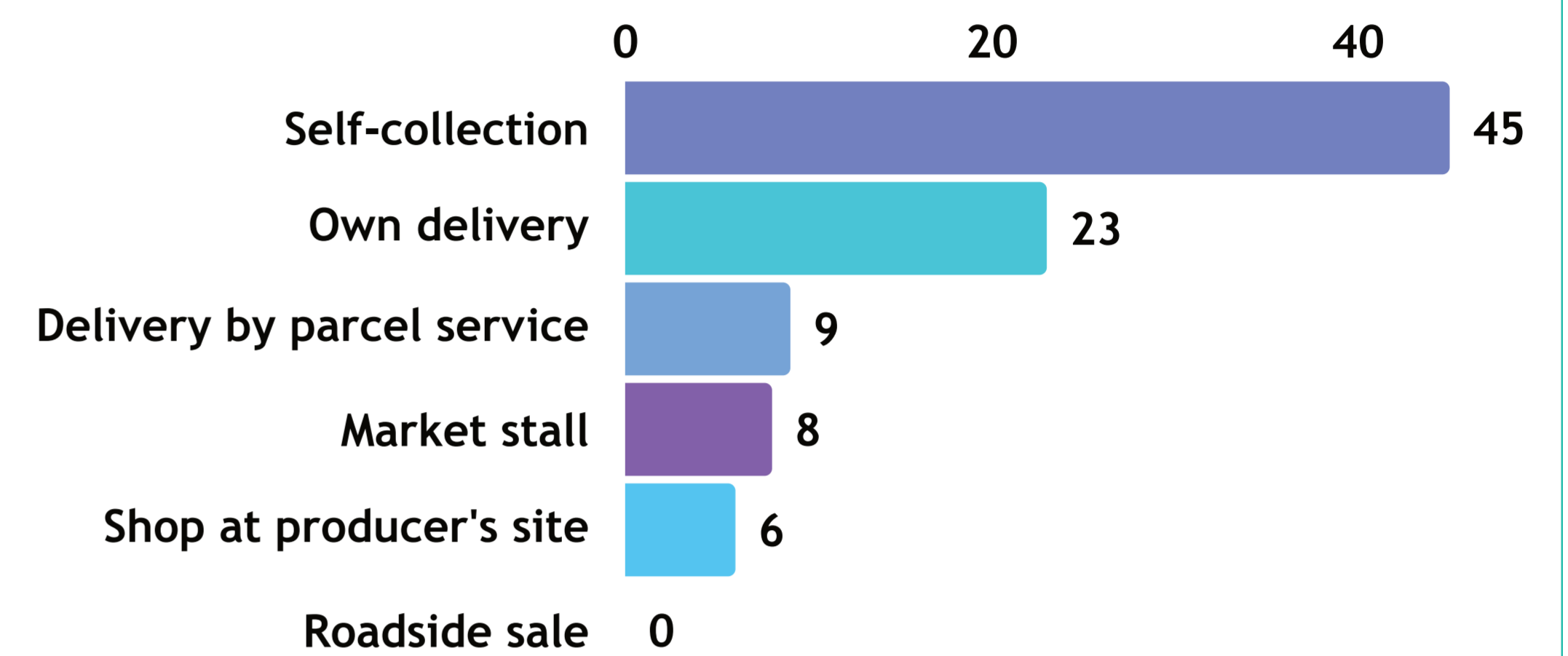
Overview

Due to the strong focus of Austrian consumers on organic farming, Austria offers a versatile market for AFNs. Social and political developments in recent years, such as the Covid pandemic, supply chain problems and international crises, have increased the demand for regional products and the desire for traceability of origin even more. Almost every Austrian has bought organic food at least once in the past six months. Both the frequency and quantity of organic products bought increased continuously (Amainfo, 2024). Consequently, it is important that domestic food producers have a high level of logistics knowledge in order to be able to handle the complexities of administration and distribution. Only if consumers' expectations in terms of service quality are met, they continue to support producers' shift towards more sustainable agriculture.

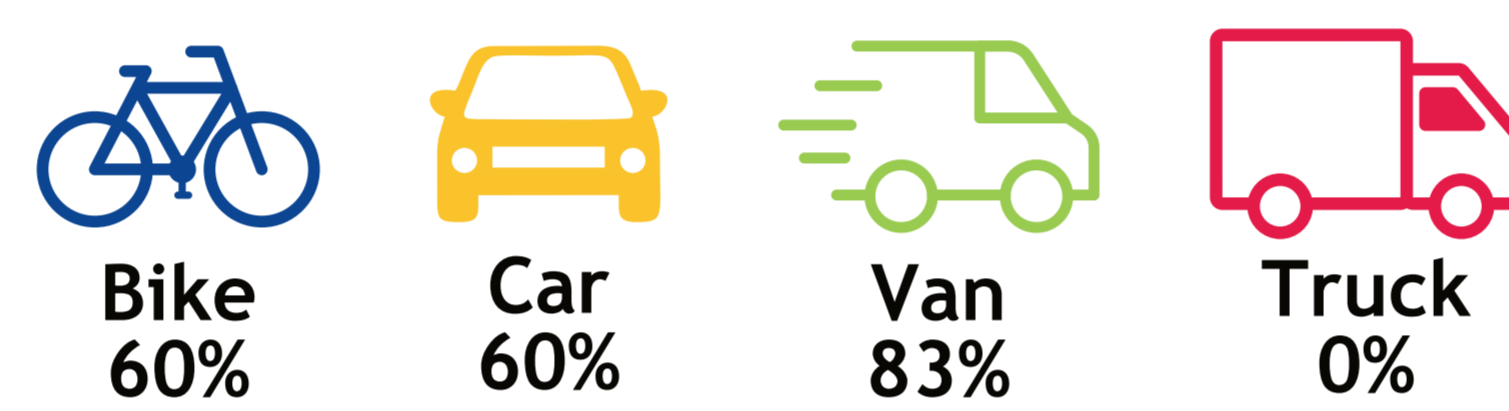
Transport & Logistics

The most prevalent distribution channel between identified AFNs is **self-collection**, utilized by 45 AFNs, followed by **own delivery** (23). 9 AFNs use **parcel service for distribution**, while 8 utilize market stalls for their product sales. **Shops at producer's site** are available in 6 cases, while **roadside sales** are not used by any AFN.

Distribution channels

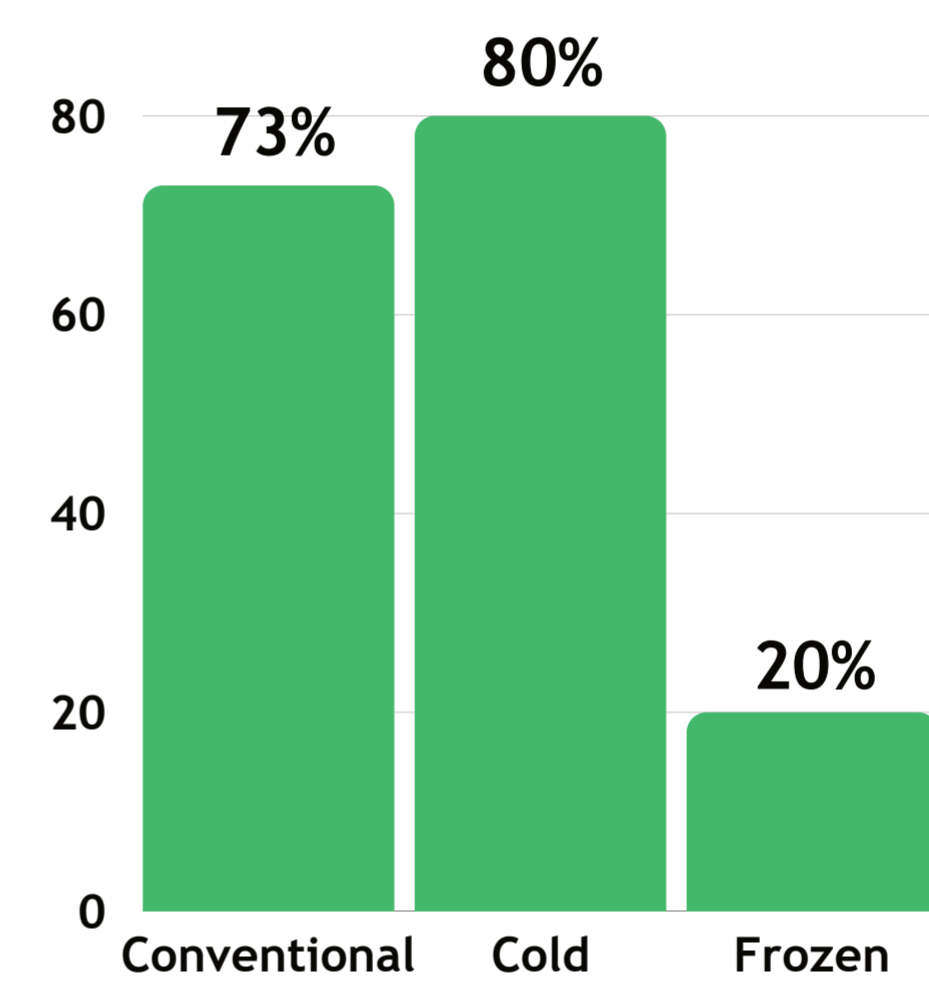


Transportation methods

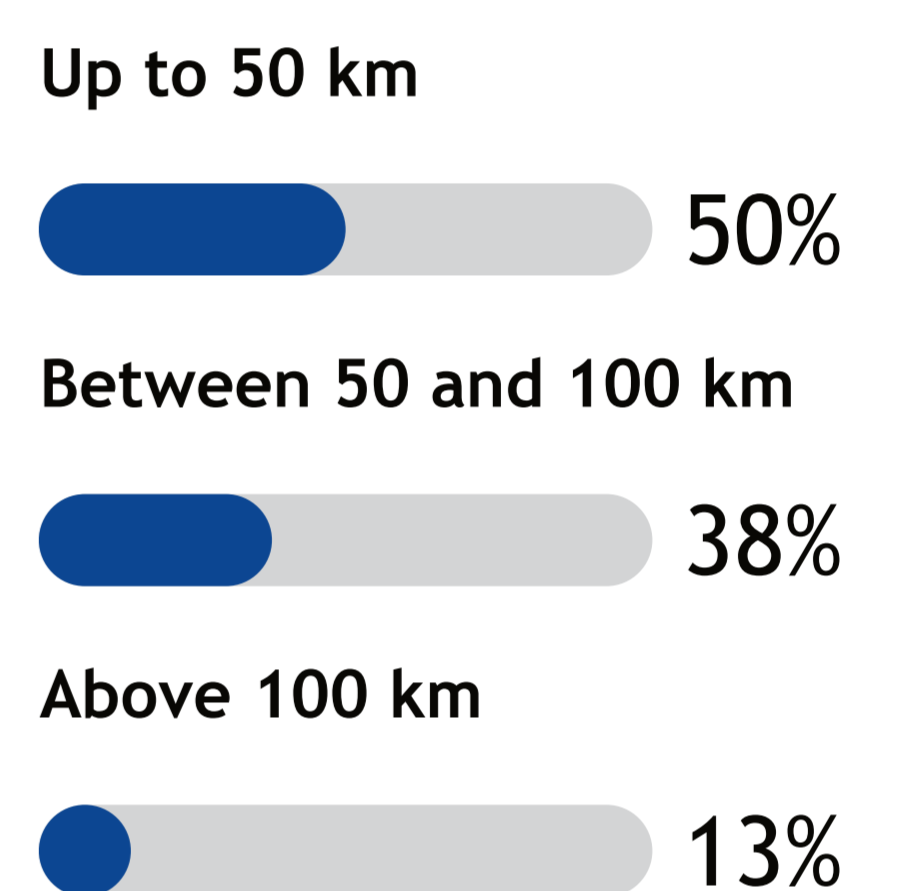


Vans are the predominant mode of transportation for deliveries among AFNs, with 83% of AFNs using them, followed by cars and bicycles, both used by 60% of AFNs. Trucks are not used by any AFN.

Storage facilities



Catchment area



Challenges



Reluctance of AFNs to co-operate by pooling financial and human resources to reduce costs and fill the gaps not served by large market players



Low level of active support and promotion of AFNs by politicians and the public sector



Need to invest more in marketing strategies to increase consumer awareness of AFNs

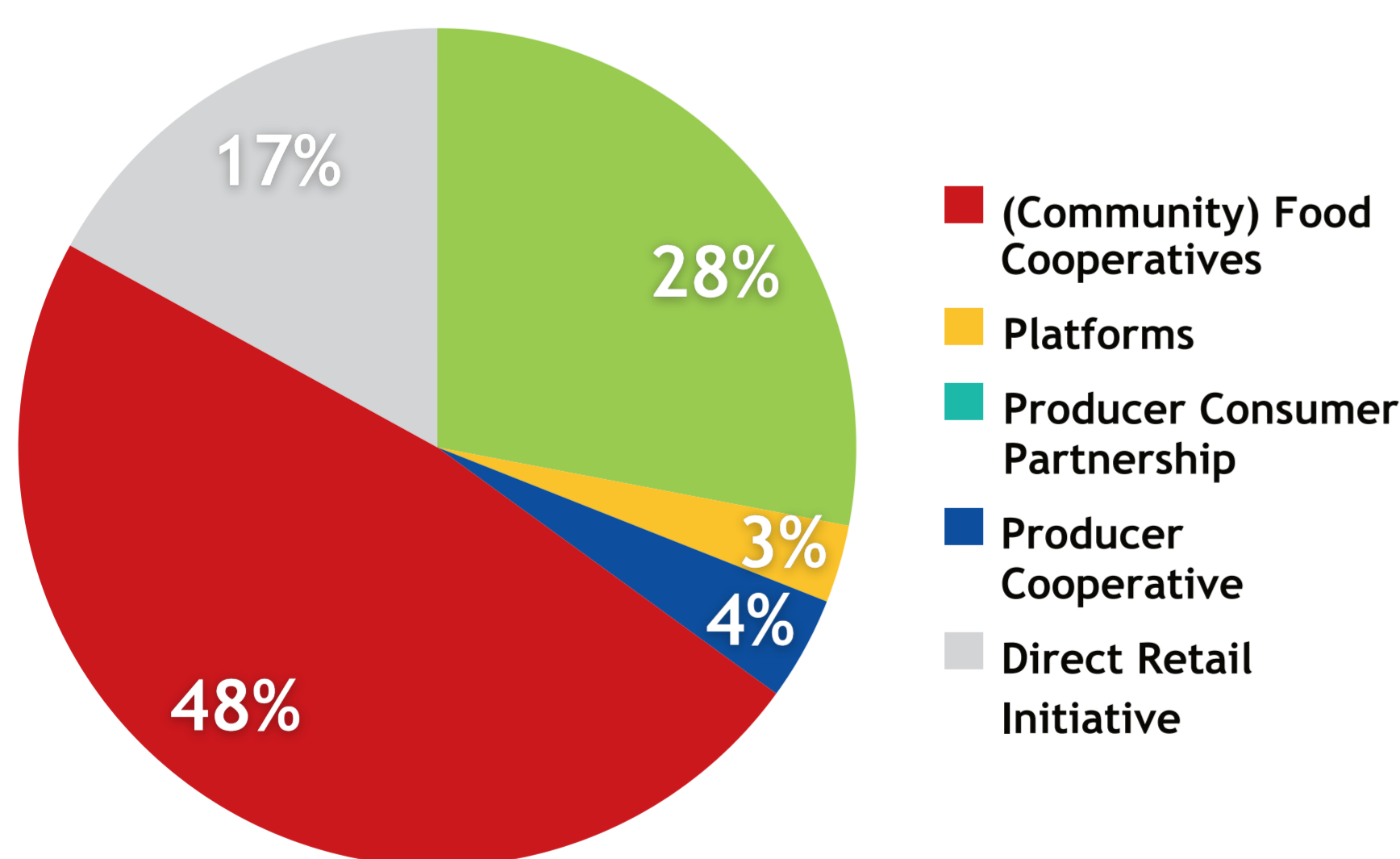


Importance of technology adoption, sustainability and collaboration to improve efficiency and market competitiveness



Increasing influence of consumer preferences on pricing, leading to a shift in agricultural production and food supply

Forms of identified AFNs



What Austrian AFNs stand for:

- ✓ Good product quality
- ✓ Trustworthiness
- ✓ Reliability
- ✓ Easy communication
- ✓ Organic certification
- ✓ Local and regional sources
- ✓ Traceability
- ✓ Convenience of logistics

Logistics solutions



Order management: Most AFNs receive orders daily or multiple times a week, primarily through online channels. However, the order volumes are relatively small, resulting in high order-picking efforts, especially during seasonal peaks.



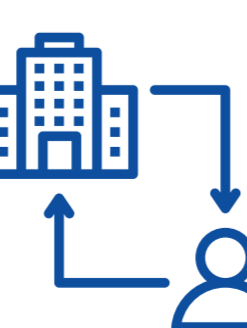
Warehouse management: AFNs predominantly use shelf and pallet storage, along with colli flow racks. Storage aids such as carts are common, though some AFNs do not use any storage aids. Handling frozen goods remains challenging for many due to stringent requirements.



Internal, partial or complete transport and delivery networks: Although outsourcing transportation is an option, nearly 90% of AFNs prefer to manage their supply chains partially or entirely in-house. Most deliveries are made within 100 kilometers, primarily using vans, cars, and bikes.



Sustainable solutions for reverse logistics: Recyclable and reusable packaging units are widely utilized. However, advanced technologies like real-time tracking and RFID are rarely adopted.



Reducing the distance between producers and consumers: Direct purchasing and local sourcing are common methods used to shorten the distance between producers and consumers. AFNs prioritize various measures to promote sustainability and environmentally friendly practices.

