European Commission

Circular Cities & Regions Initiative

Self-Assessment-Tool Quick Guide

July 2025

How the Self-Assessment-Tool can help you

The Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) aims to support the implementation of circular economy actions referred to as Circular Systemic Solutions (CSS) across cities, regions, and territorial clusters in Europe. It is part of the guidance and support instruments provided by the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI) – and connects to other instruments such as the CCRI-Methodology and the Knowledge Repository.
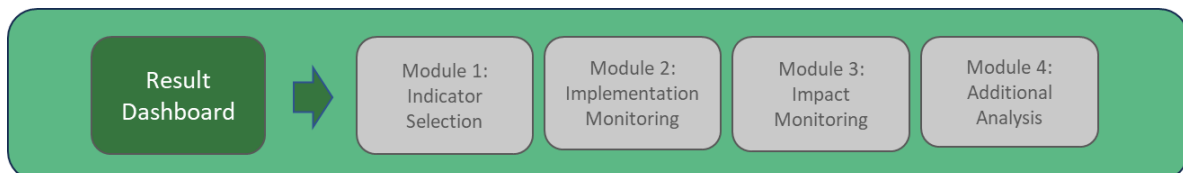
The purpose of the Self-Assessment-Tool to support you in tracking the progress towards your respective Circular Economy (CE) goals. The tool acknowledges the diversity of CE projects and local circumstances. Therefore, the SAT emphasizes a tailored monitoring approach that addresses your specific needs and context. The tool does not aim at comparing your progress to the performances of other cities and regions.

Tool Structure and Process

The SAT differentiates two levels of analysis:

- Implementation Monitoring concentrates on tracking your progress in carrying out planned circular economy actions based on so called output indicators (i.e. implementation indicators).
- Impact Monitoring helps you to assess wider outcomes and overarching effects of your actions. It utilizes an own set of impact indicators.

The process is structured into four modules, as shown in the graph below. A key focus of the SAT is to help you identifying the right indicators for your assessment (Module 1). In different categories, you will be provided with possible indicators, from which you can choose the ones that are relevant to you or adjust them according to your needs. You may also add your own indicators to the assessment. Modules 2 and 3 provide a framework for the definition of targets and regular monitoring along the two levels of analysis outlined above. Module 4 provides optional additional areas of assessment. The results of all modules are visualised in a dashboard.

Module 1: Indicator Selection

The Module Indicators Selection contains four Sheets.

1. **Regional Characteristics**

The context in which you are operating your circular economy actions will affect your outcomes and the suitable set of actions and indicators. Therefore, this section helps you to specify and monitor the socio-economic characteristics of your region or municipality. Monitoring these contextual indicators helps to calculate and contextualise the circular economy indicators in the later steps of your self-assessment.

2. **Questionnaire**

The selection of meaningful indicators forms the basis for your assessment. To support you in this important step, the Self-Assessment-Tool starts with a short questionnaire that asks for general information about your circular economy activities. You will be asked to provide some information if the

main objective of your circular economy activities is focussed on a specific value chain or on activities related to R-strategies.

In addition, you will be asked to rank the different main objectives and implementation strategies on which your approach is focussed. Based on your answers, you will be provided with recommendations for indicators for the two levels of analysis.

These suggestions can be also shown in the "Indicator selection" sheet by applying the respective filter.

3. Optional Own Indicators

In the following step, you have the option of adding own specific indicators to your monitoring scheme. We recommend to first browse through the indicator database (found in the next sheet "Indicator Selection") and return later to this step to consider any specific data availabilities or measuring needs you may have. To add an own specific indicator, it must be defined and assigned to one of the two indicator categories mentioned above.

4. Indicators Selection

In the sheet "Indicator Selection" you can select the set of indicators for your assessment. The underlying indicator list contains more than 100 entries that can be filtered according to various criteria.

The possible filters include:

1. level of analysis
    1.1. implementation indicators
    1.2. impact analysis
2. suggested indicators / other indicators / own indicators
3. policy domains
4. subdomains

To compile the set of indicators for your assessment you may start by considering the indicator suggestions based on the questionnaire. Then you may browse through the whole catalogue by applying the provided filter options. You may select single filter options or multiple criteria by using the "ctrl" button while clicking on the filter buttons. You can unselect an active filter by clicking on the funnel icon at the top right of each filter category.

To add an indicator to the assessment you need to select it by using the drop-down function in the first column "Indicator Selection".

Module 2 & 3: Target Definition and Monitoring

In the subsequent Implementation Monitoring and Impact Analysis modules, the tool requires you to manually refresh to your selected indicators. Please follow the respective instructions to filter the indicator selection to 'selected'. This is necessary for the

proper functioning of the tool. Modules 2 & 3 are both divided into two steps which are target definition and monitoring over time.

1. Target definition

Defining SMART[1] targets is a crucial step to provide for a meaningful measurement approach. Module 2 focuses on actions taken and shows therefore the selected output indicators while module 3 shows the selected impact indicators. You can specify the selected indicators and define base and target level as well as respective years. The baselevel can be any year for which data is available. Further specifications and comments to your indicators ensure that future entries in the indicator monitoring are consistent with the previous ones.

2. Monitoring

After the base level and target level as well as the years are defined, you are asked in the next step to insert the achieved annual values of selected indicators. It is suggested to update the values on a yearly basis.

The time frame covers the years 2020 to 2030 to ensure that a possible trend can be identified at any point in time.

Module 4: Additional Analysis

With the optional additional analysis sheets, you may expand your assessment to better understand the conditions your approach is operating under.

For the analysis of relevant policies and actors, you may list those of importance and give them a rank of priority. To better understand the status of your circular economy governance, you may use the OECD governance framework, which has been integrated into the tool. Across 12 categories, you will assess different criteria and rank them on a scale from 1 to 6.

Results

The results area contains two dashboards for different purposes. One for visualisation within the tool and one for a simple handout or exporting of a progress and target comparison.

Dashboard

After you have completed the assessment, you can return to the dashboard to track your progress or get an overall impression of your indicator selection.

Here you are provided an overview over the covered policy domains to examine for potential blind spots as well as a list of all selected indicators by level of analysis. Below you can display the progress in one graph for each level, implementation progress and impact.

At the bottom of the dashboard, you can see a visualisation of the additional analysis.

Progress Results

The second dashboard may be used as part of a roadmap reporting. For this purpose, the page is formatted to be directly printed or exported in an A4 format.

---

[1] Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

The Dashboard contains 3 Graphs for both levels of analysis to display the top 3 indicators in a concise format. To do so you need to select your top three key indicators in each category (Implementation and Impact) from the indicators you have selected using the drop-down menus.

Further Information

The SAT intends to provide guidance for monitoring progress in implementing a circular solution in your municipality or region. On this page you will find links to other helpful tools, papers and handouts developed as part of the CCRI.