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D 2.2 Digital Self Assessment Tool

Interregional Innovation Investments Instrument (I3)

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

The main objective of the WP2 is to build a dynamic recycling textile ecosystem at the European level. The ecosystem set up and nurturing will be achieved thanks to the support of a digital platform already in place called RegioGreenTex Digital Tool (described in D 2.1), which will be scaled up and finetuned to host and support multiple tools, contents, functions and training material functional to match SMEs at EU level and to disclose new pathways for the sustainability and resilience of textile production and market. The specific objectives of the WP are:

- Build up a European recycling textile ecosystem on a digital platform
- To assess and profile each SME joining the ecosystem (via the Self-assessment tool) to provide specific coaching/training, as well as effective matchmaking
- Raise awareness and upskill SMEs on textile recycling and circular design
- Encourage the interregional debate on the future of the sector, its sustainability and green transition (policy dimension of the ecosystem)

1.2 Objectives of the self-assessment tool

The self-assessment tool (SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL – hereafter, SAT) is developed to help profile SMEs and evaluate the recycling potential of their products and processes. The self-assessment tool supports businesses by giving feedback and suggestions for the next steps to be undertaken and- the support needed to grow and match with other SMEs, as part of the ecosystem.

This tool must help the SMEs to detect their own capacities and shortcomings, identify coaching or training needs, provide links to complementary partnerships, benchmarks, and improve their strategies and approaches to eco-design, waste management and recycling.

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2 TOOL DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY

2.1 Design stages

2.1.1 Inspiration: SMARTX

EuraMaterials, in charge of the SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL development, drew its inspiration from a similar tool developed as part of another European project: SmartX. Developed at the time by the respective partners, this tool consisted of a series of questions and visualized a company's positioning on various criteria, thanks to several radar graphs. All answers were also available in the form of an Excel file.

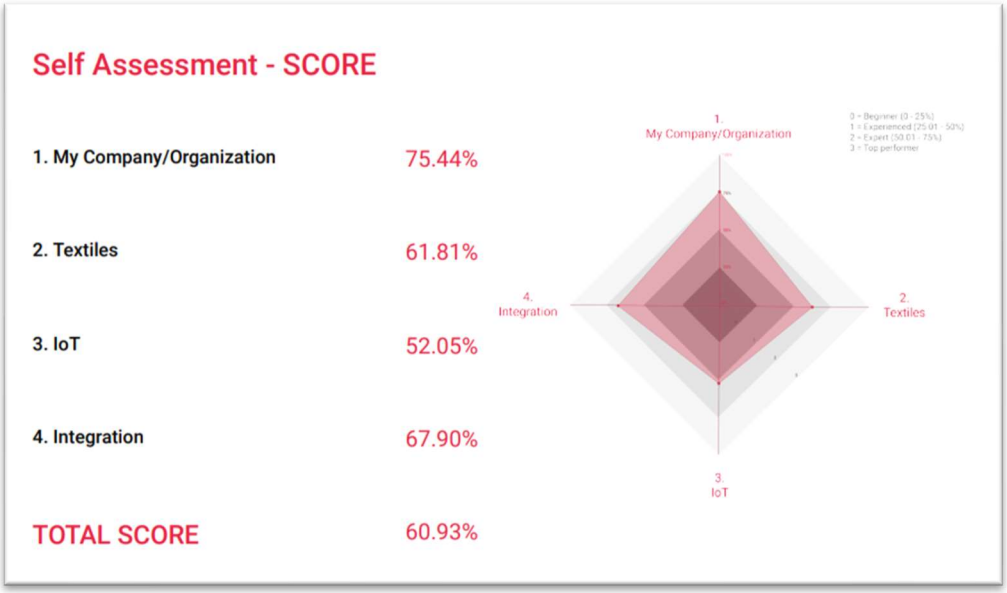

Figure 1 : Radar chart, SMARTX general score

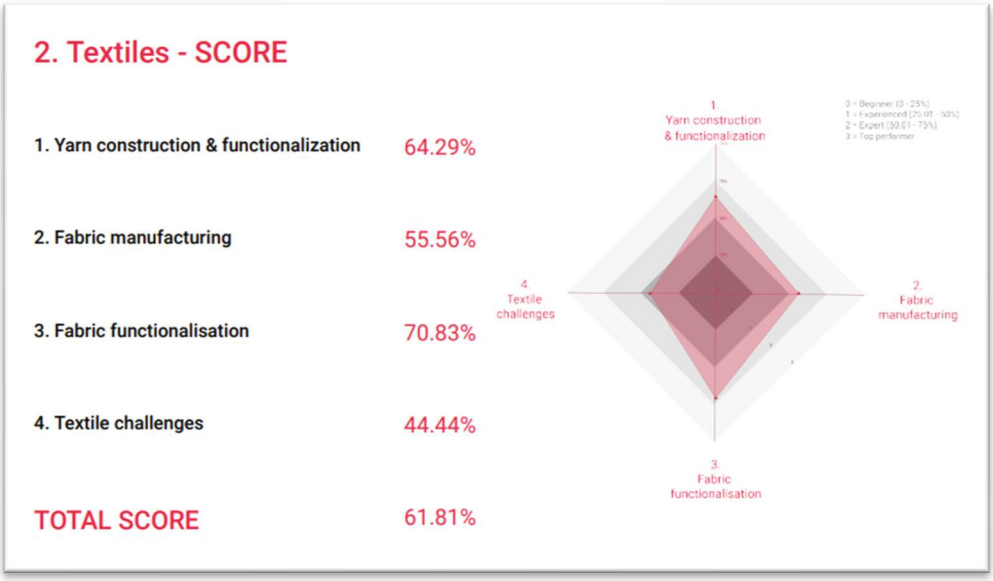

Figure 2 : Radar chart, detailed textile score, SMARTX

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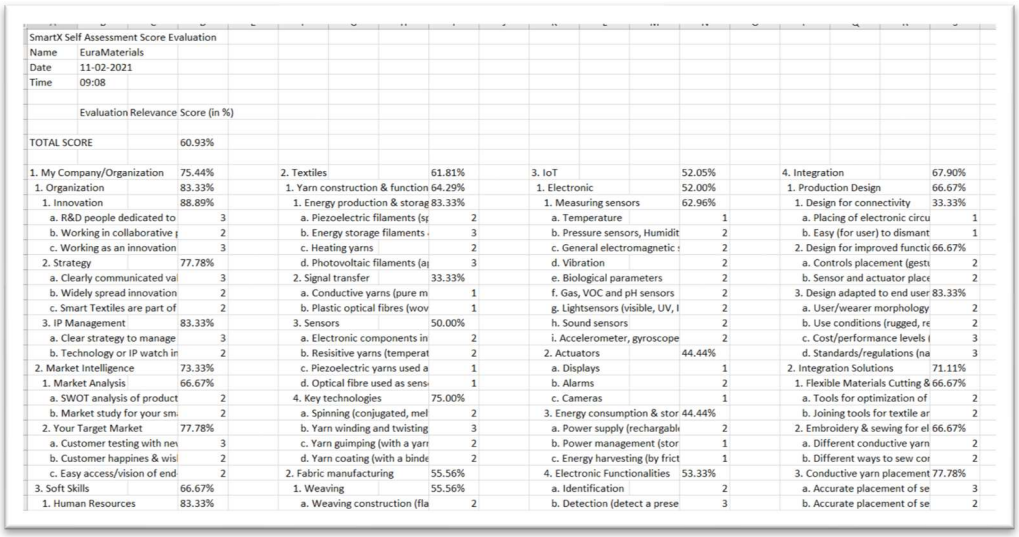

SmartX Self Assessment Score Evaluation																	
Name	EuraMaterials																
Date	11-02-2021																
Time	09:08																
	Evaluation Relevance Score (in %)																
TOTAL SCORE		60.93%															
1. My Company/Organization		75.44%	2. Textiles		61.81%	3. IoT		52.05%	4. Integration		67.90%						
1. Organization		83.33%	1. Yarn construction & function		64.29%	1. Electronic		52.00%	1. Production Design		66.67%						
1. Innovation		88.89%	1. Energy production & storag		83.33%	1. Measuring sensors		62.96%	1. Design for connectivity		33.33%						
a. R&D people dedicated to		3	a. Piezoelectric filaments (sp		2	a. Temperature		1	a. Placing of electronic circu		1						
b. Working in collaborative p		2	b. Energy storage filaments		3	b. Pressure sensors, Humidit		2	b. Easy (for user) to dismant		1						
c. Working as an innovation		3	c. Heating yarns		2	c. General electromagnetic s		2	2. Design for improved functi		66.67%						
2. Strategy		77.78%	d. Photovoltaic filaments (ap		3	d. Vibration		2	a. Controls placement (gest		2						
a. Clearly communicated val		3	2. Signal transfer		33.33%	e. Biological parameters		2	b. Sensor and actuator place		2						
b. Widely spread innovation		2	a. Conductive yarns (pure m		1	f. Gas, VOC and pH sensors		2	3. Design adapted to end user		83.33%						
c. Smart Textiles are part of		2	b. Plastic optical fibres (wov		1	g. Lightsensors (visible, UV, I		2	a. User/wearer morphology		2						
3. IP Management		83.33%	3. Sensors		50.00%	h. Sound sensors		2	b. Use conditions (rugged, re		2						
a. Clear strategy to manage		3	a. Electronic components in		2	i. Accelerometer, gyroscope		2	c. Cost/performance levels (		3						
b. Technology or IP watch in		2	b. Resisitive yarns (temperat		2	2. Actuators		44.44%	d. Standards/regulations (na		3						
2. Market Intelligence		73.33%	c. Piezoelectric yarns used a		1	a. Displays		1	2. Integration Solutions		71.11%						
1. Market Analysis		66.67%	d. Optical fibre used as sens		1	b. Alarms		2	1. Flexible Materials Cutting &		66.67%						
a. SWOT analysis of product		2	4. Key technologies		75.00%	c. Cameras		1	a. Tools for optimization of		2						
b. Market study for your sm		2	a. Spinning (conjugated, mel		2	3. Energy consumption & stor		44.44%	b. Joining tools for textile ar		2						
2. Your Target Market		77.78%	b. Yarn winding and twisting		3	a. Power supply (rechargabl		2	2. Embroidery & sewing for el		66.67%						
a. Customer testing with ne		3	c. Yarn guimping (with a yarn		2	b. Power management (stor		1	a. Different conductive yarn		2						
b. Customer happines & wis		2	d. Yarn coating (with a binde		2	c. Energy harvesting (by frict		1	b. Different ways to sew cor		2						
c. Easy access/vision of end		2	2. Fabric manufacturing		55.56%	4. Electronic Functionalities		53.33%	3. Conductive yarn placement		77.78%						
3. Soft Skills		66.67%	1. Weaving		55.56%	a. Identification		2	a. Accurate placement of se		3						
1. Human Resources		83.33%	a. Weaving construction (fla		2	b. Detection (detect a prese		3	b. Accurate placement of se		2						

Figure 3 : Detail score evaluation, SMARTX

Although fully usable, the development of this tool was carried out with standard office tools (Google form, Excel) not adapted to automation. Creating scores and graphs was therefore very time-consuming, as most of the work was done manually. It was therefore decided very early on that automation would be necessary, and that it was essential to outsource this part of the work in order to have a tool that was easy to use, efficient, and exploitable, in consultation with Ariadne Innovation (P18) in charge of the implementation of the RegioGreenTex Digital Tool.

2.1.2 Section definition

Following the example of the tool developed for the SmartX project, we decided that it would be relevant to create several sections, in order to evaluate the position of companies according to these sections. The sections initially selected were those of the circular economy pillars:

- Material impact
- Energy saving
- Water management
- Durability
- Waste management
- Recycled content
- Regulations and policies
- Knowledge about circular economy tools (LCA eco-design, and environmental management)

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Thus, by obtaining a score for each pillar, the company is able to know in which section it needs to improve in order to increase its knowledge and be more involved in terms of the circular economy.

In June and July 2023, the SMARTX reference tool and the proposed themes were presented to the RegioGreenTex WP2 partners, in order to validate the spirit of the tool to be developed, as well as the topics to be covered to assess the involvement of companies in terms of their environmental approach.

2.1.3 First questions - SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL version 1

We embarked on a long period of monitoring, so as to have several documents available on the subject of the circular economy. This phase included a desktop research of questionnaires already available on the internet in this area of focus, aiming to create a library of resources that could be the back-bone of the questions developed/created for the SAT

At the same time, we looked at what was being done in terms of question types. We came up with a list of different types of questions:

- Open-ended questions: where participants are free to write their own answers

- Multiple-choice questions: participants are asked to tick the boxes where the correct answers are given.

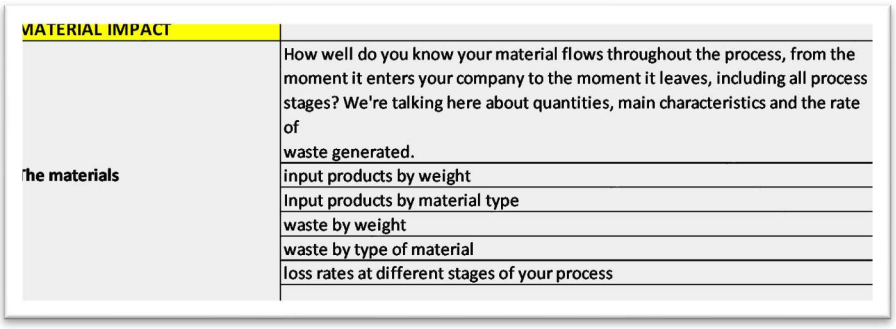
- True/false or yes/no questions: where participants have to say whether the statement is correct or not.

- Rating scale-type questions: where participants are asked to select a value (number) that most closely matches their choice.

- Questions with "Likert scale" rating type,: where participants have to choose from 5 or 7 answers, covering the whole spectrum of opinions, from one extreme to the other.

- Ranking questions: where participants have to rank answers in order of preference

- Picture choice questions: where participants have to choose the right answer from among the illustrations.



MATERIAL IMPACT	
	How well do you know your material flows throughout the process, from the moment it enters your company to the moment it leaves, including all process stages? We're talking here about quantities, main characteristics and the rate of waste generated.
The materials	input products by weight
	Input products by material type
	waste by weight
	waste by type of material
	loss rates at different stages of your process

Figure 4 : Sample questions - Material impact category

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REGULATIONS and POLICIES	
tegulations and policies	Are you familiar with the European strategy on textiles and the actions being taken? planned (ongoing and planned)
	Do you know the European strategy on textiles and the actions planned (current and planned)? IN PARTICULAR ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:
	Extended producer responsibility
	EU Ecolabel
	Environmental display
	end of unsold stock destruction
	the fight against microplastics
	digital paseeport
	ecological claims
	conditioned waste flow

Figure 5 : Sample questions - regulations and policies category

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION	
abels and certifications with nvironmental, social and animal welfare claims	Do you know of or use one or more environmental labels?
	do you know these labels
	ECOLABEL EUROPEEN
	ECOCERT
	OEKOTEX
	BLUESIGN
	FAIRTRADE MAX AVELAER
	GOTS
	IMPACT ENVIRONNEMENTAL (A à E)
	BIORE SUSTAINABLE TEXTILE
	RWS, RMS, RAS (Responsible Wool, Mohair, Alpaca Standard)

Figure 6 : Sample questions - environmental communication category

2.2 Participatory approach with stakeholders

2.2.1 Consortium presentation and feedback

A first version of the questions was presented at the Regional Cluster workshop that took place in Prato in September 2023. Initial feedback on the questions was encouraging, but a common remark was made: the needs of the companies are not clearly identified. The questions need to be revised to reflect the real needs of companies.

2.2.2 Changes to questions - SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL version 2

A new phase of reflection began, and following a staff departure at EuraMaterials, a new person joined the project. After a few weeks' reflection, a second version of the SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL was proposed.

This version is presented in 3 stages:

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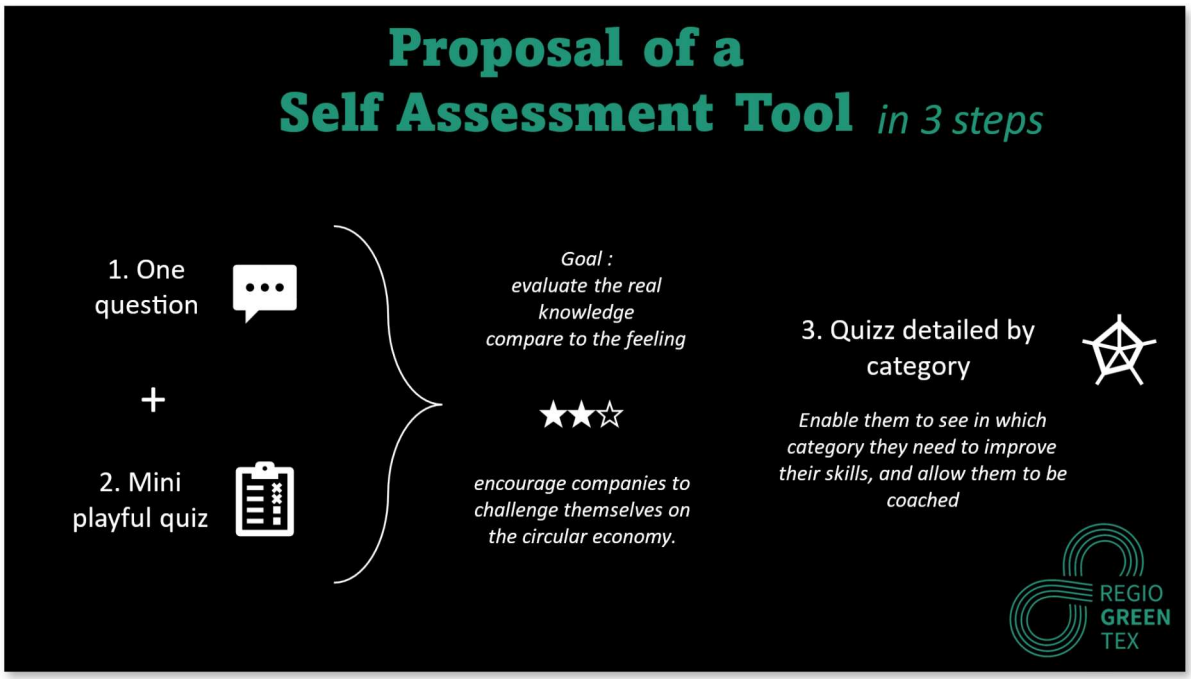

Figure 7 : Self assessment tool version 2

The first step was to ask a very general question: "How would you rate your knowledge of the circular economy? The company is then asked to position itself on a scale:

Figure 8 : Self assessment tool version 2 - step 1

The second phase consisted of asking 12 questions on the theme of the circular economy. For each question, there were 4 possible answers, but only one correct answer. Each correct answer earned 1 point. Depending on the number of points obtained, a second cursor appeared on the scale

0 to 3 points : I'm not at all familiar with the circular economy

4 to 6 points : I've heard of the circular economy, but I haven't delved into the subject yet

7 to 9 points : I have advanced knowledge of the circular economy and can explain its basic principles

10 to 12 points : I am a circular economy expert with extensive experience in implementing circular economy and sustainable development projects

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Figure 9 : Self-assessment tool version 2 - step 2

The different positions of the two points highlight the difference between what the company thinks it knows, and what it actually knows.

The third phase consists of a quiz on the circular economy, the aim of which was to educate in an entertaining way, through questions divided into 8 categories: the pillars of the circular economy. The result is a radar diagram which identifies the category(ies) in which the company needs coaching. This provides:

- Visual communication: Spider charts are easy to understand for a wide audience, including people who are not familiar with complex figures. They are therefore useful for internal and external communication.

- Quick and clear visualisation : Spider diagrams offer an immediate visualisation of skills or levels in several categories. At a glance, you can see a person's strengths and weaknesses in each area.

- Decision making: They help to make informed decisions by identifying areas where improvements are needed. This can guide training, professional development or recruitment decisions

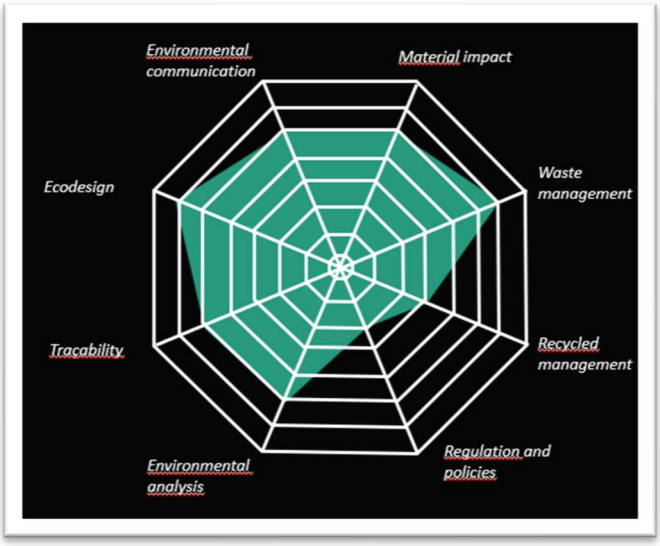

Figure 10 : Example of a radar diagram - Self assessment tool version 2

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2.2.3 Consortium presentation and feedback

Version 2 of the SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL was presented to part of the consortium in October 2023. The visualization of the third part was particularly appreciated, as it responded to the request to reveal needs. However, the questions were too "people" rather than "business" oriented.

It resulted to be essential to have an initial set of self-assessment questions on companies' mastery of circular economy issues. However, EuraMaterials consulted with the other partners within the RegioGreenTex project and established that it is essential to have an initial set of self-assessment questions on companies' mastery of circular economy. With the help of this tool, we can determine a start point and an end point when it comes to knowledge acquired on circular economy, with the help of the project.

2.2.4 Modifying questions - SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL version 3

Following feedback from the consortium, we proposed a third version of the tool in November 2023. We decided to divide the self-assessment tool into two parts:

- A first part to evaluate the company: about fifteen questions, each with 5 possible answers:

o Not concerned

o No or very little knowledge

o Little knowledge but the company is interesting about the subject

o Good knowledge of the subject: expertise in the company or with other players to cover part of the subject

o Very good knowledge and mastery of the subject : at least one expert who covers most of the subject

- A second part to evaluate the company's employees. A quiz with approximately 18-15 questions in each category:

o collecting, sorting and repairing

o recycling

o process

o eco-design

o environmental approach

Following this presentation, the following comments were made:

- categories are validated

- SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL must target the company, not just the respondent

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- the questions must focus on what the company is currently doing, with the addition of a dimension on what it intends to do in the near future or what it does not intend to do.

- the SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL should be useful for coaches (WP3, WP4).

2.2.5 Modifying questions - SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL version 4 and higher

Following feedback, several modifications to the SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL were presented to the consortium in December 2023.

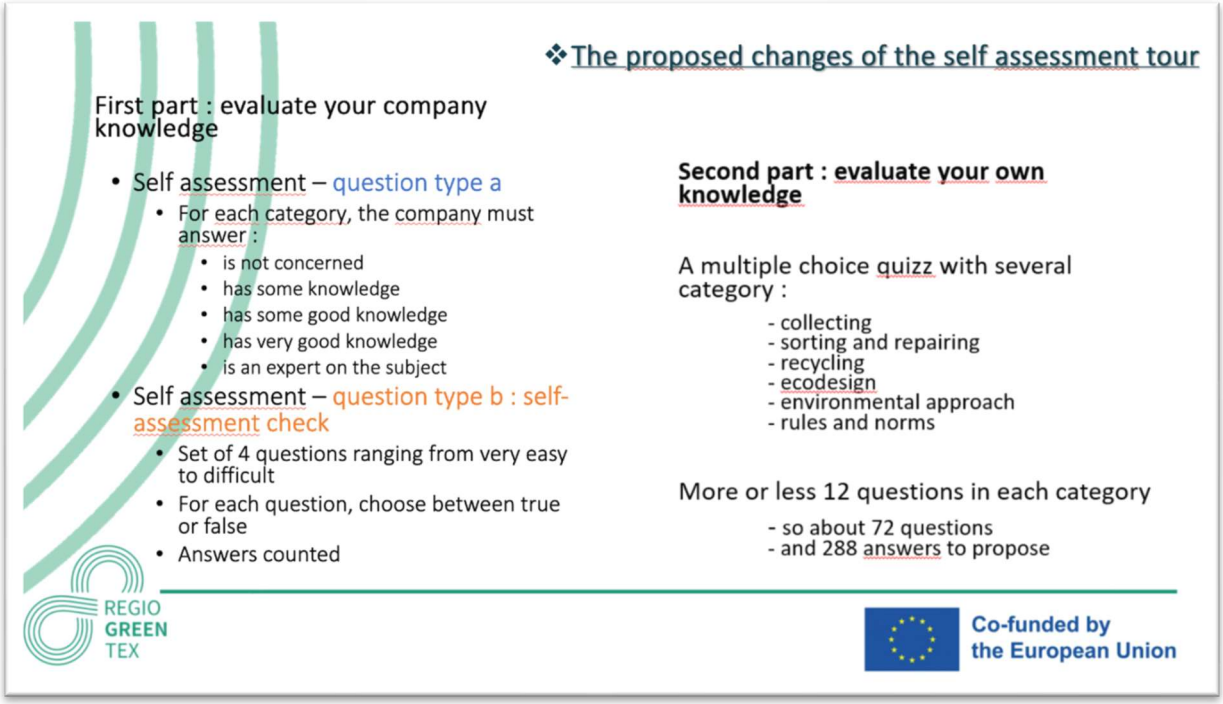

Figure 11 : Self-assessment tool version 4 -proposed changes

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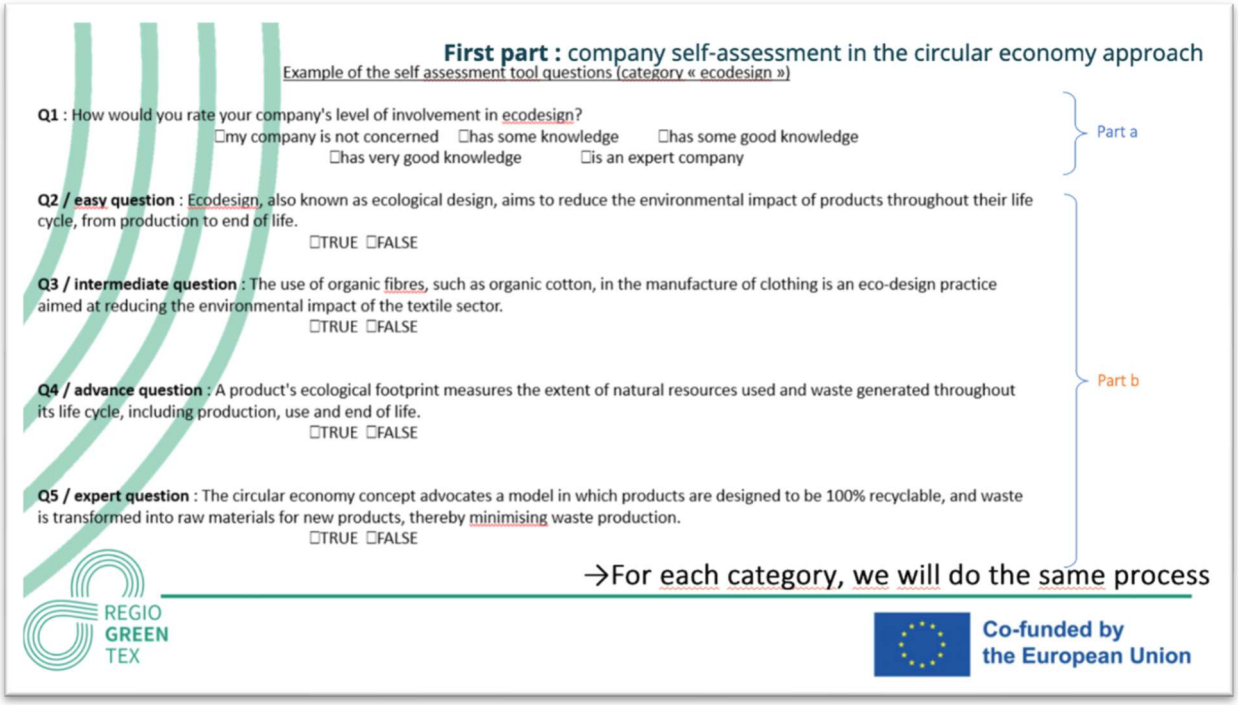

Figure 12 : Self-assessment tool version 4 - first part questions

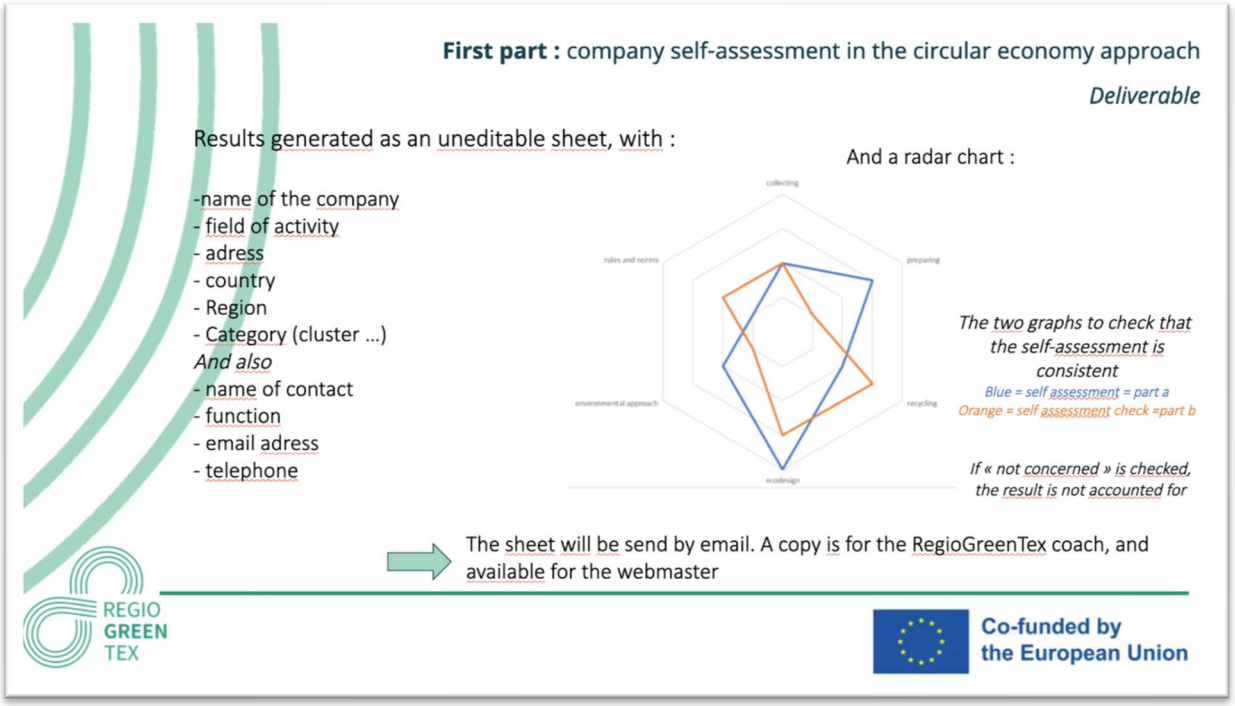

Figure 13 : Self-assessment tool version 4 - results

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Figure 14 : Self-assessment tool version 4 - second part questions

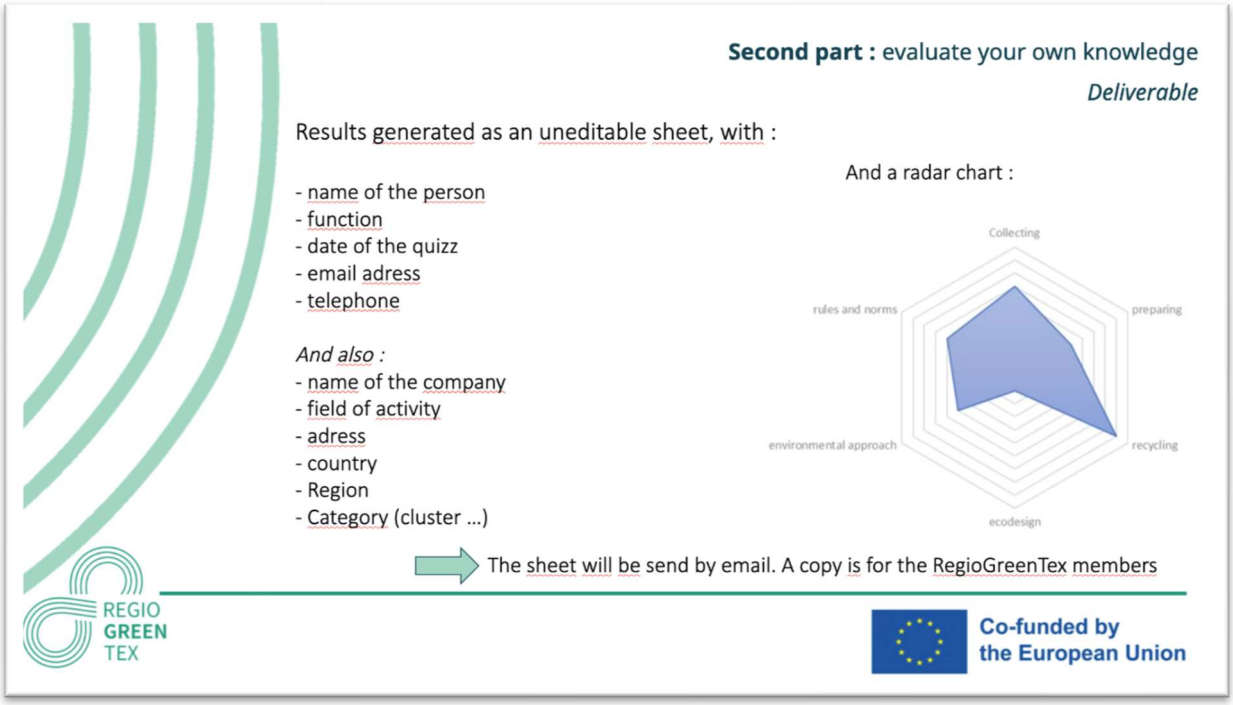

Figure 15 : Self-assessment tool version 4 - second part result

The entire consortium was satisfied with the development of Self-assessment tool. However, while the second part has been validated for the educational part, the first part needs to be reworked. Indeed, there is some uncertainty as to the relevance of the first questionnaire: it is impossible to know whether the self-assessment is consistent or whether it is over- or under-evaluated.

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As an approach, the SAT developers consider that only one person per company is required to complete the first questionnaire.

Following multiple discussions, we came to the conclusion that the SAT should also be integrated on the digital tool and accessible to the RGT project companies.

2.3 Invitation to tender and selection of external service provider

Following the positive feedback from the consortium, we drafted a call for tender for the IT development of the tool, the generation of graphs, the automatic sending of e-mails and the visualization of results via an application. This tender was sent to 3 companies based near EuraMaterials, during the month of January 2024:

- Easy web
- Techniweb
- HD Dev

After a careful reading and evaluation of the proposals received, we chose HD Dev in February.

Discussions have begun with the company to set up the online SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL from March 2024, in order to present the tools that will be used, validate the tool specifications and set up the working methodology between Euramaterials and HD Dev.

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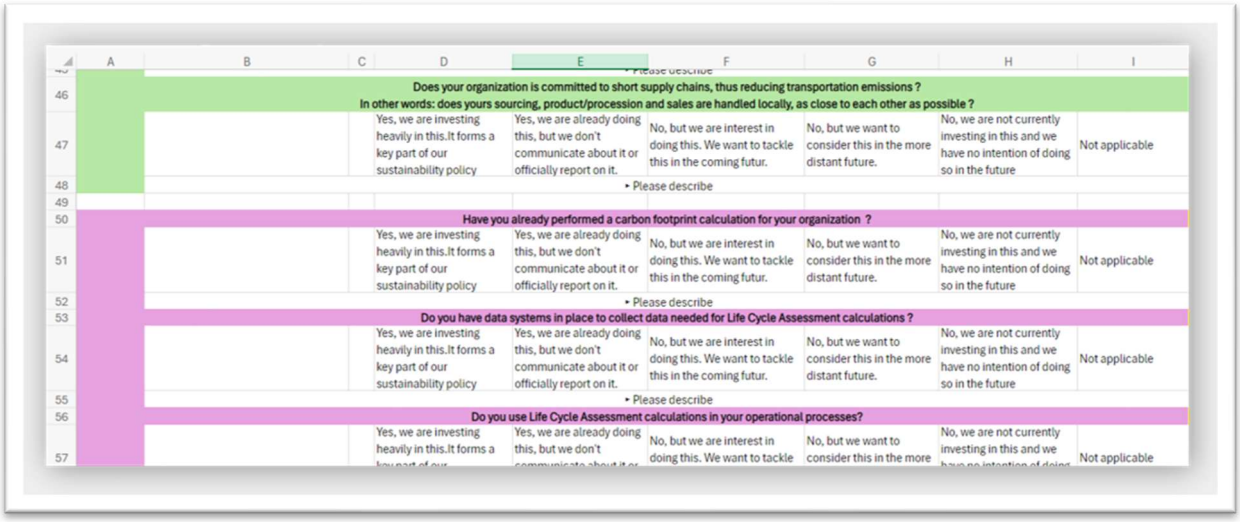
3 STRUCTURING THE TOOL

3.1 Consortium participation (Porto)

Since the last exchanges with the consortium, in December 2023, the questions have been reworked and the answers have been oriented towards the company's positioning.

In order to test the questions, we have taken advantage of the annual meeting of the RGT project in Porto in March 2024 to get feedback from companies on the question typologies and categories.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
46		Does your organization is committed to short supply chains, thus reducing transportation emissions ? In other words: does yours sourcing, product/procession and sales are handled locally, as close to each other as possible ?							
47				Yes, we are investing heavily in this.It forms a key part of our sustainability policy	Yes, we are already doing this, but we don't communicate about it or officially report on it.	No, but we are interest in doing this. We want to tackle this in the coming futur.	No, but we want to consider this in the more distant future.	No, we are not currently investing in this and we have no intention of doing so in the future	Not applicable
48						• Please describe			
49									
50		Have you already performed a carbon footprint calculation for your organization ?							
51				Yes, we are investing heavily in this.It forms a key part of our sustainability policy	Yes, we are already doing this, but we don't communicate about it or officially report on it.	No, but we are interest in doing this. We want to tackle this in the coming futur.	No, but we want to consider this in the more distant future.	No, we are not currently investing in this and we have no intention of doing so in the future	Not applicable
52						• Please describe			
53		Do you have data systems in place to collect data needed for Life Cycle Assessment calculations ?							
54				Yes, we are investing heavily in this.It forms a key part of our sustainability policy	Yes, we are already doing this, but we don't communicate about it or officially report on it.	No, but we are interest in doing this. We want to tackle this in the coming futur.	No, but we want to consider this in the more distant future.	No, we are not currently investing in this and we have no intention of doing so in the future	Not applicable
55						• Please describe			
56		Do you use Life Cycle Assessment calculations in your operational processes?							
57				Yes, we are investing heavily in this.It forms a key part of our	Yes, we are already doing this, but we don't	No, but we are interest in doing this. We want to tackle	No, but we want to consider this in the more	No, we are not currently investing in this and we	Not applicable

Figure 16 : Questions tested during annual meeting in Porto

The feedback has been positive:

A few partners find the answers too long to read, but a large majority of respondents find the answers relevant and detailed enough to enable them to choose the correct answer.

We need to change "product" to "product/process" to make SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL suitable for all companies.

In the "production" section, we were asked to separate out the resources (water, energy, buildings, etc.), to enable the companies concerned to provide details, if necessary.

In the "production" section, we were asked to multiply the questions in order to divide the tier 1 subcontractors, and the tier 2 and 3 subcontractors.

In the "eco-design" section, we were asked to add questions to refine the results.

Following these exchanges, we reworked the questions. The number of questions is now :

For the "raw materials" section: 6

For the "production" part: 8

For the "eco-design" section: 7

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For the "transparency" section: 11

Also, it was considered useful to apply the SAT not only in M18, but also at the end of the RGT project, to asses companies progress following the support measures offered in WP3 and WP4.

RGT lead partner, as well as WP2, WP3, and WP4 leaders and Task leaders will collaborate in order to ensure partner SMEs answer the SAT questionnaires in due time.

3.2 Visual aspect of the form

To make the SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL more attractive, the sections have been highlighted with new graphic elements inspired by the RegioGreenTex project:

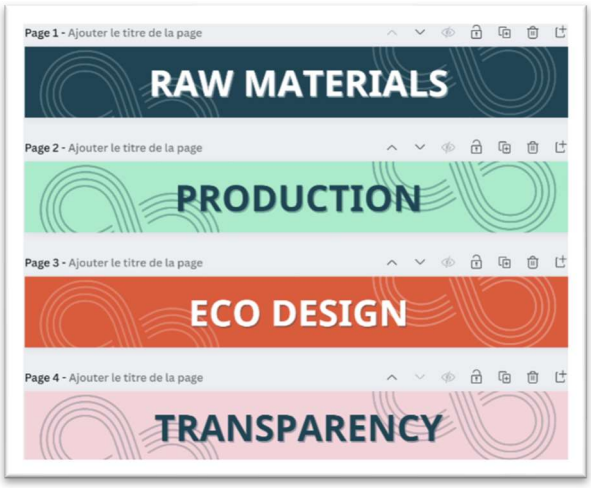

Figure 17 : Design of different parts for the online version

3.3 Question formatting

To make the SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL useful to coaches, for each question the respondent is asked to justify the answer with details.

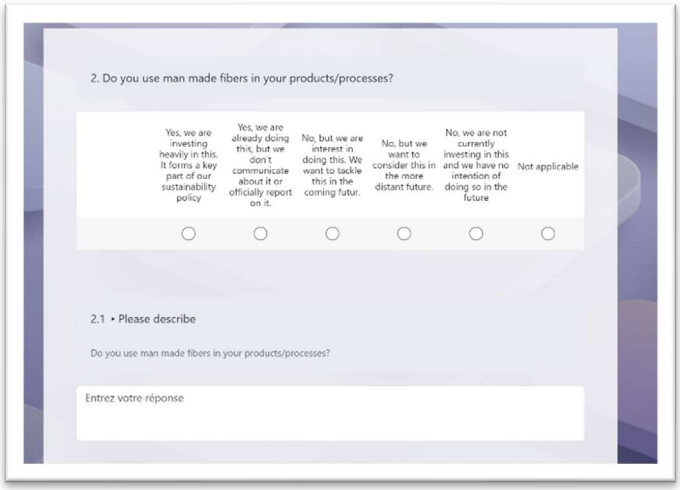

Figure 18 : Formating question

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3.4 Application mock-up

A first version of the application has been set up and it is accessible via Microsoft Teams only to EuraMaterials members for the time being.

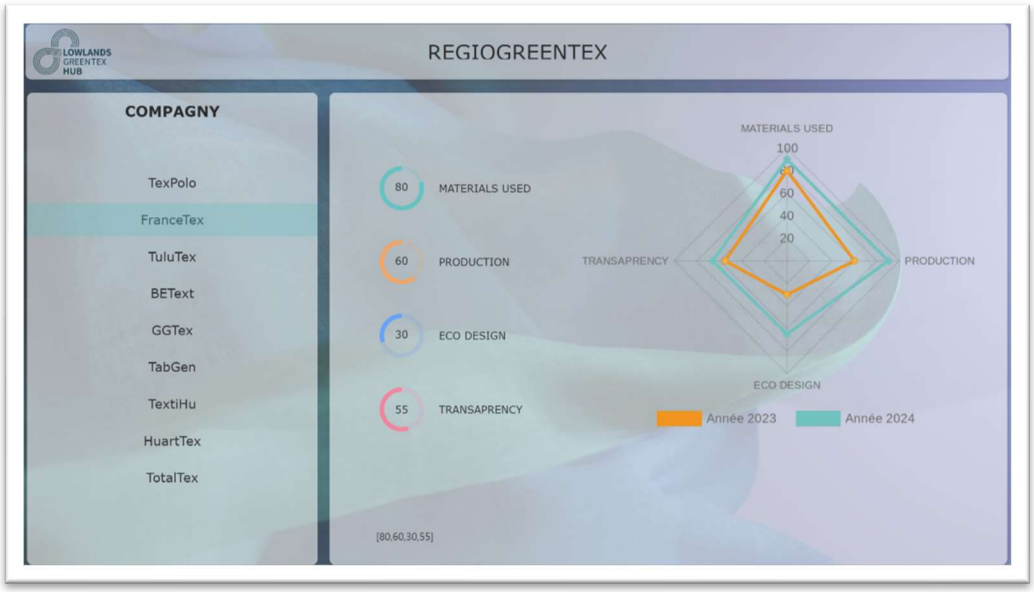

Figure 19 : First mock-up of the Self-assessment tool app

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4 IT DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Self-assessment Tool

4.1.1 Intro and outro text

The Self-assessment tool introduction, finalization, and automatic mailing texts have been drafted. As have the identity details requested at the start of the Self-assessment tool.

Figure 20a 20b : Intro of the Self-assessment tool

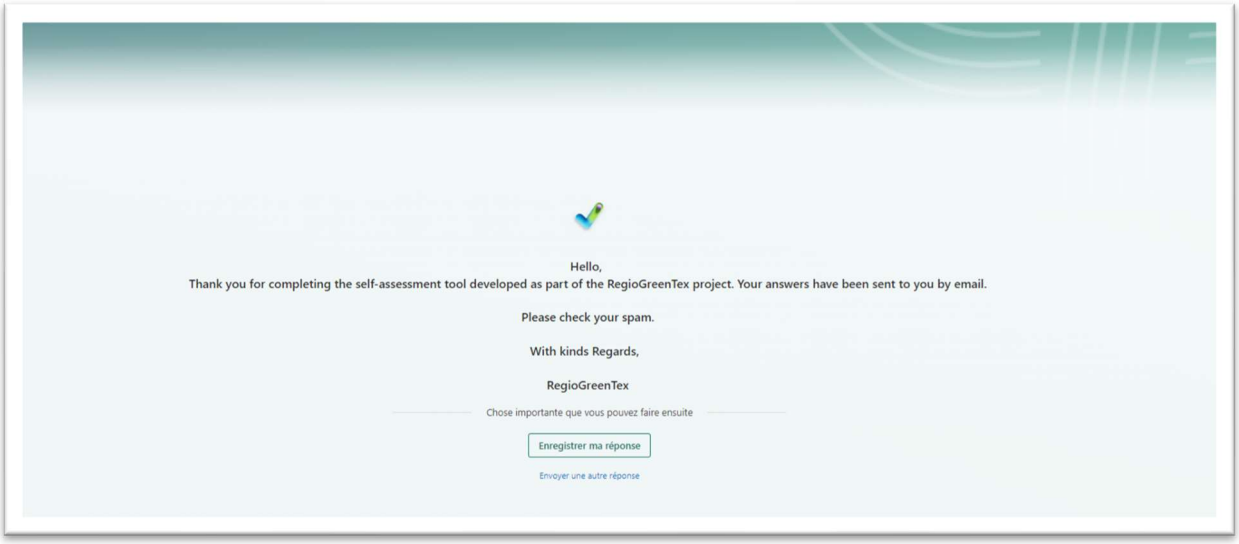

Figure 21 : Outro of the Self-assessment tool

4.1.2 Application

The application has been improved. It is now composed of 3 display pages:

Dashboard: enables rapid visualization of a company's results in the form of a radar chart. A system of filters (country/company name/date) allows you to select the company.

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Entries: displays the values obtained by the company (not available at present: will allow a coach to be assigned in this section)

Company: displays the company's identity card

Figure 22 : Second mock-up of the Self-assessment tool app

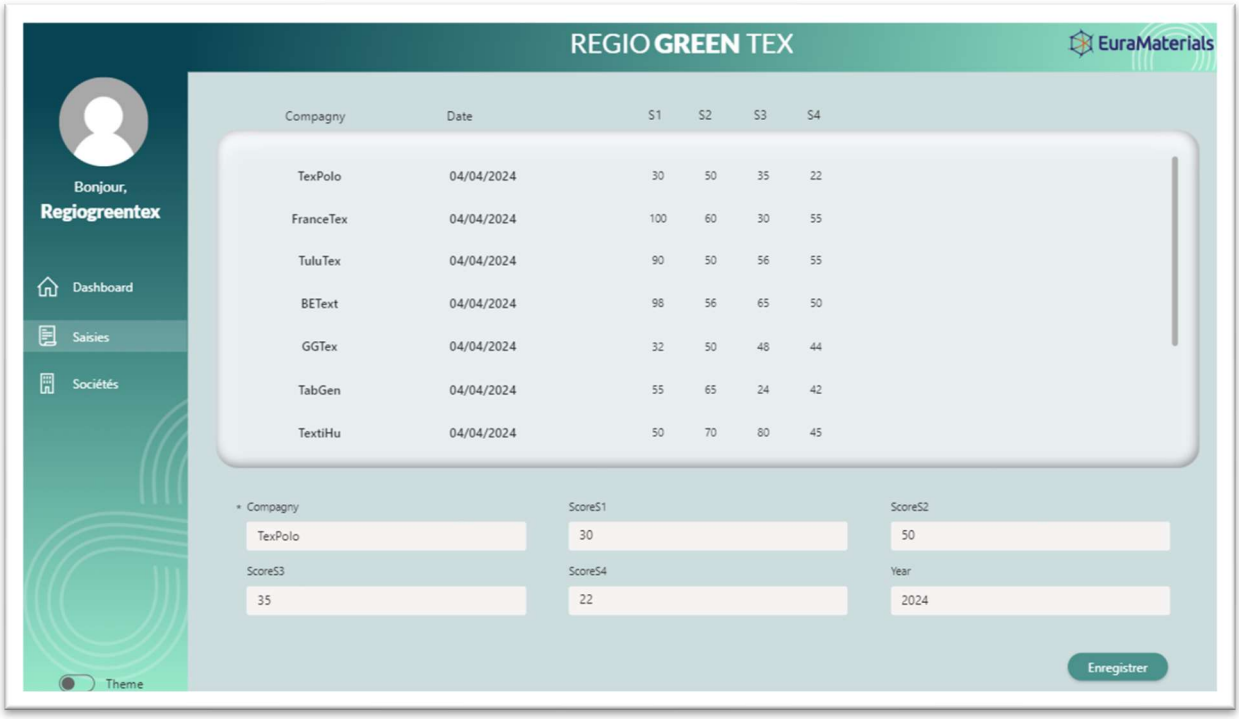

Figure 23 : Detail of the Self-assessment tool app

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4.2 Development of educational quizzes

In parallel with the Self-assessment tool, the interactive part is also being developed. The mode chosen for development allows you to learn as you go:

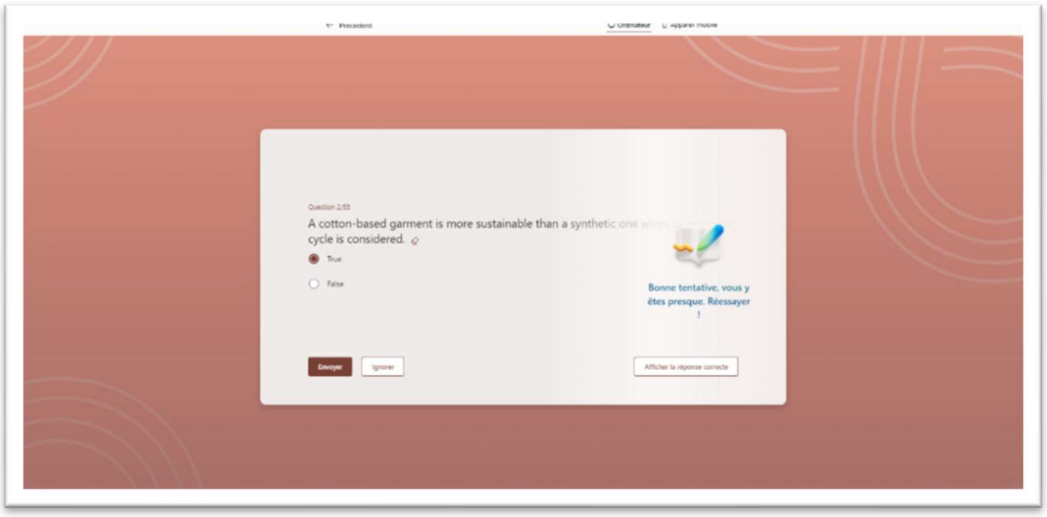

Figure 24 : Quiz part - wrong answer

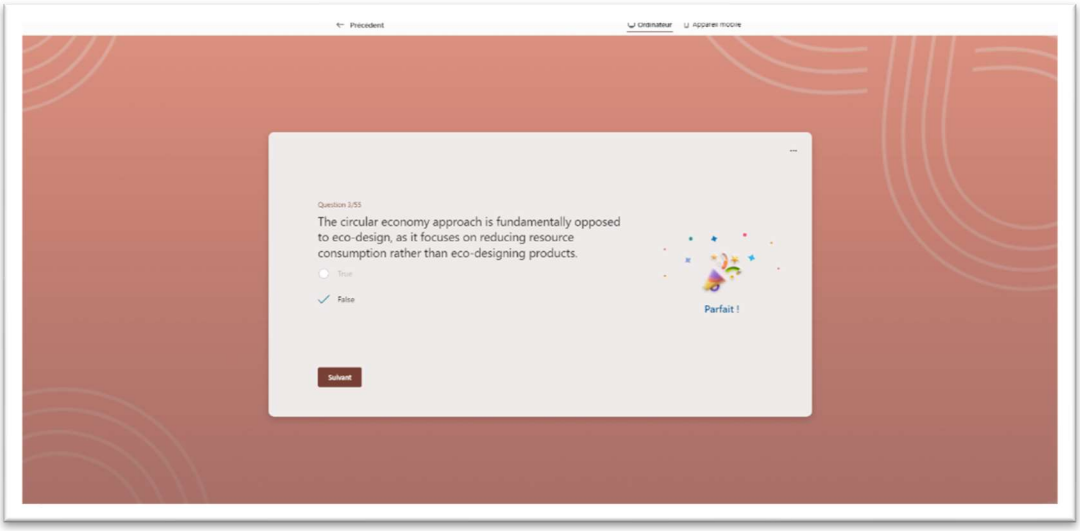

Figure 25 : Quiz part : right answer

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4.3 Questions

To diversify the educational quiz, we've redesigned the questions, offering the answers in the form of images.

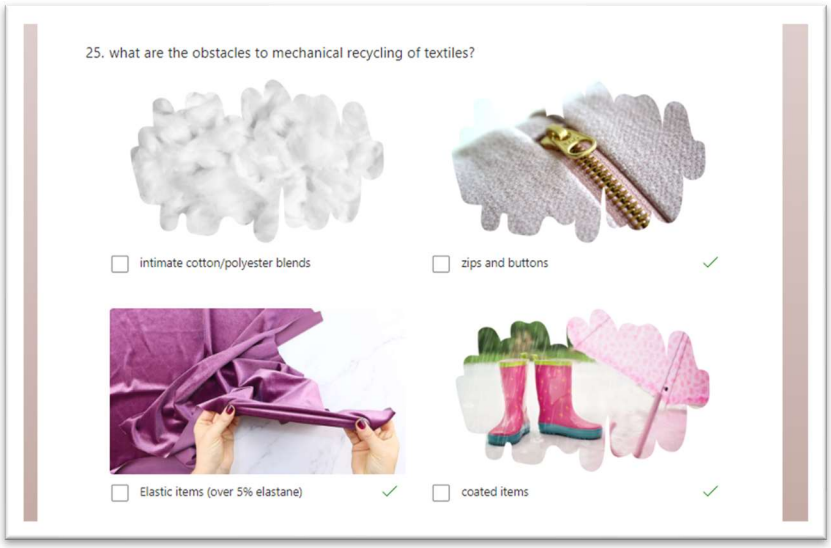

Figure 26 : Example of images as answers

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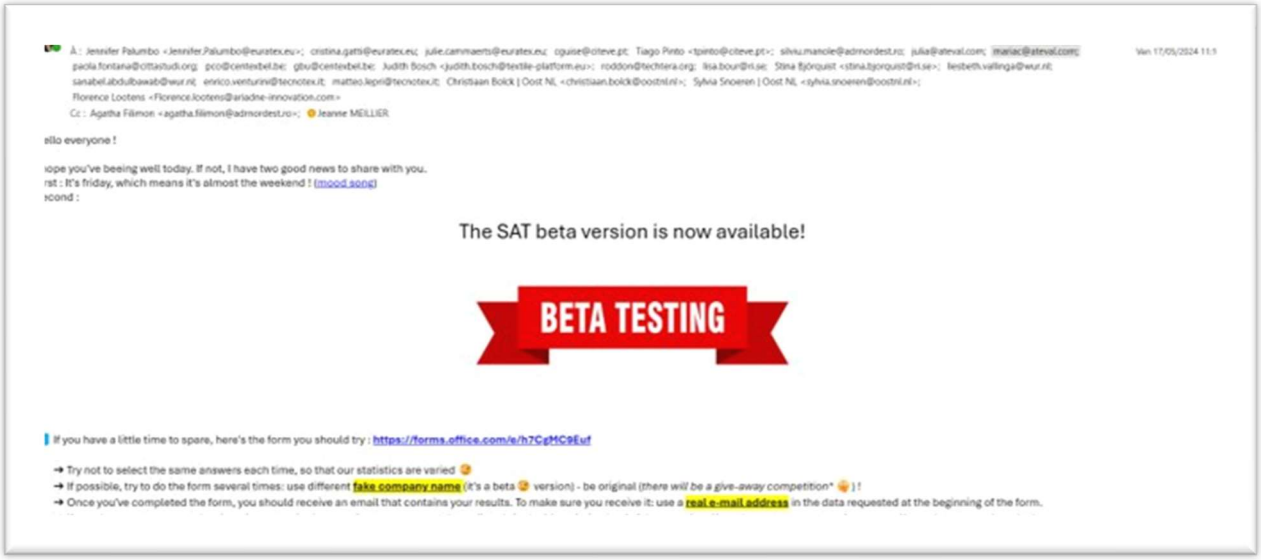
5 BETA TEST

The beta test session was launched during a Lowland Hub meeting on May 2, 2024. The Self-assessment tool and the educational quiz were sent to members of project (see screenshot below).

An e-mail was then sent to the entire consortium for feedback on the use of the tool.



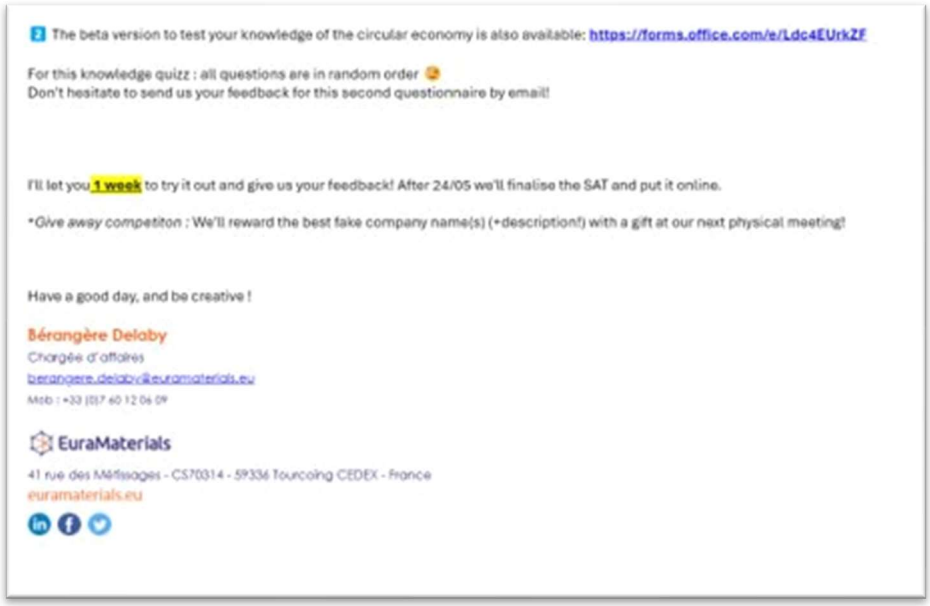


Figure 27a 27b : mailing for beta test

To date, 5 companies have participated in the beta test: Ariadne, Rise, Oostnl, Technotex, Euramaterials.

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6 ON LINE

The design of SAT is in the schedule, the beta-testing will be finished by the end of June 2024, when the tool will be available on the RegioGreenTex Digital Tool.

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