

MINUTES OF THE 3rd MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT – EMHCN

1. Identification of the Meeting

On 28 May 2026, at 4.00 pm (CEST), the 3rd Meeting of the Executive Secretariat of the EMHCN – European Network of Cities for Mental Health was held via videoconference.

The meeting was chaired by the Municipality of Barcelos, in its capacity as the coordinating body of the Executive Secretariat.

2. Quorum and Opening

It was confirmed that a quorum was present, with three of the four members of the Executive Secretariat initially in attendance; the meeting was therefore valid for the purposes of decision-making.

The Municipality of Murcia was initially absent, but was subsequently represented during the session.

The meeting was formally opened by the Councillor for Health of the Municipality of Barcelos, and the agenda, which had been distributed in advance, was presented.

The agenda was approved by consensus, without any objections.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were submitted to the members for consideration.

As no corrections or objections were raised, they were unanimously approved.

4. Institutional Update and Reorganisation of the Agenda

An update was presented on the status of implementation of previous decisions, including:

- Annual Activity Plan;
- the process of integrating the Advisory Board;
- mapping of municipal practices;
- website development;
- exploratory international contacts;

- preparation of applications for European funding.

The reorganisation of the agenda was approved by consensus, including the joint consideration of items relating to projects and funding, and the bringing forward of items concerning international policy positions.

5. Municipal Practices and European Funding

An analysis of 41 municipal initiatives and opportunities for European funding, including URBACT IV and Horizon Europe, was presented.

The Executive Secretariat decided by consensus:

- to take note of the technical documentation;
- to approve the preliminary inclusion of municipal practices in the Annual Activity Plan;
- to continue with technical and thematic consolidation;
- to align practices with opportunities for European cooperation and funding.

This resolution will be put to the General Meeting on 12 June 2026.

6. URBACT IV Application (Exploratory Phase)

The possibility of preparing an application for the URBACT IV programme, led by the Municipality of Barcelos in collaboration with the Network, was raised.

It was expressly stated that this was an exploratory phase and did not constitute a formal decision by the Network.

The Executive Secretariat took note of the information, and the cautious, phased approach was endorsed.

7. New Member Cities

An updated list of 20 candidate cities, comprising municipalities in Portugal and Spain, was presented.

It was also noted that there are three further cities in the final stages of joining, including municipalities in Italy and Slovenia.

Following technical validation, compliance with the previously defined criteria was confirmed.

The Executive Secretariat reached a consensus to:

- approve the preliminary admission of the 20 candidate cities;
- continue the administrative integration process;
- submit the proposal to the General Assembly on 12 June 2026.

8. Advisory Board

A progress report on the EMHCN Advisory Board was presented.

The Executive Secretariat decided by consensus:

- to formally establish the Advisory Board;
- to schedule its formal establishment for 25 June 2026;
- to continue liaising with organisations whose confirmation is pending;
- to submit the decision to the General Assembly on 12 June 2026.

9. Strategic Partnerships and In-Person General Assembly

The intention to hold an in-person EMHCN General Assembly in November 2026 was put forward.

The city of Athens confirmed its willingness to host the event, subject to the joint definition of organisational requirements.

It was agreed:

- holding a preparatory meeting between the Executive Secretariat and Athens in July 2026;
- drafting a guidance document setting out logistical and programme requirements;
- preparing a proposal for presentation at the General Assembly in September 2026;
- setting November 2026 as the indicative timeframe for the in-person event.

10. Institutional Communication and Website

An update was presented by the Municipality of Braga regarding the development of the Network's website.

The Executive Secretariat decided by consensus:

- to continue developing institutional communication;

- to set 25 June 2026 as the indicative date for the website to go live;
- to link the launch to the Advisory Council;
- to prepare an institutional public communication.

11. Other Matters

Information was noted regarding the ongoing technical work in relation to European funding applications.

Institutional solidarity was also expressed in light of the bereavement in the municipality of Murcia, with the Executive Secretariat offering its formal condolences.

12. Closing

As there were no further items on the agenda, the Councillor responsible for Health for the Municipality of Barcelos declared the meeting closed, thanking all members for their participation and highlighting the progress made by EMHCN during its first five months of operation.