



Special issue

**Music therapy in Europe:
Paths of professional development**

in partnership with the
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THE NETHERLANDS

Country report on professional recognition of music therapy

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HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

Music therapy in the Netherlands has a long history which goes back to the beginning of the 20th century with publications by Willem van de Wall (1929) and Bernard Lievegoed (1938). After World War II interest in music therapy started to grow and the first music therapists started to work. Today, more than 500 music therapists are working in different fields such as mental health, care for the elderly, rehabilitation centres, special needs education, forensic psychiatry and in private practices.

Associations

Music therapy in the Netherlands was united for the first time in 1962 within the Dutch Association for Creative Arts and Expressive Therapies (NVCT). The 'Foundation for Music Therapy' started in 1969 as the psychiatry-orientated NVCT could not cover the broad spectrum of music therapy. In 1977 creative arts therapists 'took over' the NVCT, other professionals such as psychiatrists and psychologists were no longer admitted for membership. Music therapists disbanded their own foundation and joined the NVCT. The NVCT existed until 2006, when the Federation of Creative Arts and Psychomotor (or Experiential) Therapies, in Dutch called 'Vaktherapieën' (FVB), was founded as an umbrella organisation, and the Dutch Association for Music Therapy (NVvMT) was established. In 2014, NVvMT has over 400 members and represents about 70% of all music therapists. Established in 1987, the main purpose of this second 'Foundation for Music Therapy' is to organise (international) congresses, such as in Noordwijkerhout (1988), which is regarded as the first European Music Therapy Congress, and Veldhoven (2007). The foundation is still active and maintains a website with an overview of music therapists in the Netherlands as well as national and international

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activities. Since 1970 anthroposophical music therapy became part of the Dutch Association for Artistic Therapies on Anthroposophical Basis (NVKToag).

Training programmes

In 1965 the first four-year Bachelor's training programme for arts therapies, with music therapy as a distinct field of study, started in Amersfoort (Middeloo), followed by Nijmegen in 1978 (Kopse Hof, now HAN), Baarn in 1981 (Jelburg) and Sittard in 1984 (now Heerlen, Hogeschool Zuyd). In 1994 the Conservatory of Enschede (ArtEZ) started the only Bachelor's training programme for music therapy. In 1988 Jelburg and Middeloo were merged into the Hogeschool Utrecht (HU). Since 2010 Leeuwarden (Stenden Hogeschool) also has an accredited part-time BA training course for arts therapies with music therapy as a field of study.

BA training courses include practical training throughout the four years, and a one-year internship during the third year. For music therapists there is only one (joint) MA training programme (which started in 2006) that specifically focuses on research in the arts therapies (Hogeschool Zuyd). The Conservatory Enschede (ArtEZ) and the Conservatory Rotterdam (Codarts) have plans to start a music therapy Master's programme in the next two years. In anthroposophical medicine, Hogeschool Leiden (HL) provides a BA programme for music therapy. This programme, however, is not recognised by the NVvMT, as it is not based on the NVvMT professional profile. The HL has plans to integrate the regular and alternative approaches in their training course to obtain recognition by the NVvMT.

Professional profile

An important step in professional development was made in 1987 with the publication of the '*Professional Profile of the Creative Therapist*', which in 1999 was completed with the official '*Professional Profile of the Music Therapist*'. This profile was updated in 2009 by the NVvMT. The professional profiles are the basis for the BA training programmes. In 2012, the FVB and the branch organisation of mental healthcare institutions (GGZ Nederland) together completed the '*Profile of the Mental Health Experiential Therapist*' (GZ-Vaktherapeut).

Registration and continuing professional development (CPD)

In 1987 the NVCT took the initiative to protect the profession of creative arts therapists, including music therapists, by establishing the independent Foundation Registry for Creative Therapists (SRCT). In 2006, with the start of the FVB, the name changed to SRVB, and psychomotor therapists joined the registry. In 2014 the registry became part of the FVB. There are two levels of registration: basic (Bachelor's certification plus two years of work experience and extra supervision) and senior

level (Master's certification). As part of the registration, continuing professional development (CPD) for Dutch therapists is monitored by the Registry Committee of the FVB. Every five years all registrants have to submit a log of all CPD activities, including working hours, peer review or supervision and continuing vocational training. In 2014, 70% of NVvMT members have been registered on a basic or senior level, or are preparing to be registered.

RECOGNITION AND APPROVAL

In 2004 the government introduced a system to clearly defined occupational groups in mental health care ('CONO-beroepentabel'). The groups are: nurses, doctors, healthcare-psychologists, psychotherapists, pedagogical professions, and experiential (vak) therapists. Music therapists in this system belong to the last group. This was an important step towards recognition by the government. As a result of this, music therapy in mental health institutions can be reimbursed. The experiential therapists have applied for inclusion into the so-called 'BIG-register' (Professional Occupations in Health Care registry), which since 1993 has been organised by the Ministry of Health and Welfare (VWS). This will result in achieving protected status for the name 'music therapist' for those who have followed the official BA and MA training courses. This is a lengthy process, considering that the first contact about this form of protected status dates from around 1998. The Ministry of Health and Welfare is still considering the final criteria relating to the BIG title protection.

IMPORTANT STEPS IN THE RECOGNITION PROCESS

The paths that we recognise regarding the establishment of music therapy in the Netherlands can be illustrated by the following overall periods:

- 1) The pioneering period, which lasted until the end of the 1970s. During this time the first music therapists came and wrote about their work in institutions. It was an important moment in 1977 when the arts therapists took over the NVCT and psychiatrists were no longer able to put their mark on the development of the profession.
- 2) The period for the professionalisation of music therapy services from 1977 to 1990. Music therapy in the institutions grew very fast in this period. The first professional profile and the register for arts therapists mark the new phase.
- 3) The period for developing research and higher levels of education from 1990 to 2005. After 2000, the need grew for evidence in search for cost effective interventions. In this period music therapy research began to increase and the first Master's training programme started.
- 4) The period of growing public awareness of music therapy from 2005 to 2014. The NVvMT actively

promotes the relationship between music and health. Brain research which supports the effectiveness of music services is presented. Music therapy is recommended in several health guidelines. The first doctoral studies on music therapy are published. The next step will be music therapy at university chair level and the 'BIG' title protection. The full recognition of the music therapy profession is now within reach!

SELECTED LINKS

- ❑ CONO beroepentabel: www.conoggz.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Beroepenschema-29-03-2012.pdf
- ❑ EMTC country information: <http://emtc-eu.com/country-reports/the-netherlands/>
- ❑ Federatie Vaktherapeutische Beroepen (FVB): www.vaktherapie.nl
- ❑ NVvMT: Dutch Association for Music Therapy: www.nvvt.nl
- ❑ Register Vaktherapie: www.registervaktherapie.nl
- ❑ Stichting Muziektherapie: www.stichtingmuziektherapie.nl
- ❑ Trimbos Instituut: www.ggzrichtlijnen.nl

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