



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

in partnership with the
 European Music Therapy Confederation



PORTUGAL

Country report on professional recognition of music therapy

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HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

Interest in the field of music therapy in Portugal dates back to the 1960s when a group of professionals from the field of music education began to use music in a therapeutic way in their work settings. Following this, they began to invite music therapists from abroad to provide lectures and seminars in Portugal.

In 1989, the first music therapy training programme started in the Portuguese island of Madeira, led by Jacqueline Verdeau-Paillés. In 1996, the Portuguese Music Therapy Association (APMT) was created and further efforts were made to create university-based training programmes. In 2001, the Faculdade de Motricidade Humana started a two-year non-degree postgraduate programme in expressive therapies with a focus on music and dance therapy. In 2004, the Universidade Lusíada de Lisboa started a music therapy graduate training programme, which was later approved as an official Master's degree programme in 2009. In 2005, the Escola Superior de Educação in Porto began a three-semester training programme.

Throughout the years, the APMT has responded to information requests and organised seminars and conferences throughout the country. This has helped to educate the public and the professional community on what music therapy is and what type of contribution it can make in the fields of healthcare, education and social intervention.

RECOGNITION AND APPROVAL

In 2010, the APMT created a document with certification requirements and procedures in order to begin the process of officially recognising the competences of a professional music therapist. The first candidates and the grandfathering cases are currently being evaluated for

the title of certified music therapist. There is no government-issued certification of music therapists or definition of their career and training as of yet. The APMT's criteria for certification of music therapists are as follows:

- University-based training programme encompassing a minimum of two school years including an internship with a minimum of 80 hours/5 months duration;
- Supervision in addition to that provided by the training programme – a minimum of 40 hours individual or 60 hours of group supervision;
- Clinical experience in addition to that provided by the training programme – 200 hours of direct contact over the course of a minimum of one year;
- Personal development, self-experience or psychotherapy beyond that provided by the training programme – 80 hours, a minimum of two years;
- Courses or academic training received in the areas of psychology, health or social sciences, in order to fulfil the list of competencies pertaining to clinical knowledge required for a music therapist.

Music therapy in context in Portugal

At present, there are approximately 50 professionals practising music therapy with adequate training in Portugal. These people come from professional backgrounds in psychology, music, music education, psychiatric medicine or social work. Since 2009, a total of six music therapy Master's theses and 35 internship thematic reports have been publicly presented, covering the areas of psychiatry, special education, geriatrics, music therapy in school settings, hospital setting intervention and child/youth institutionalisation.

The majority of organisations showing interest in music therapy and supporting its application within their institution are related to special education, gerontology and music. With the help of the available internship programmes, knowledge of music therapy has been significantly growing and more graduates are finding part-time work. However, the career of the music therapist is not yet defined and there is no full-time contract specific to music therapy responsibilities.

In the past few years, music therapists have been gaining access to work in public hospitals, residential facilities for the handicapped and senior citizens, residential and day-care institutions, and public schools. This has been in addition to special education settings that have been interested for a long time in music therapy interventions for their respective population.

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Associations

The Portuguese Music Therapy Association (APMT) was founded in 1996 and it is the only music therapy organisation currently existing in Portugal. The APMT is open for general membership but within its structure an accreditation system is being implemented that will provide standards for recognition of professional music therapists in Portugal.

APMT website: www.apmtmusicoterapia.com

Email: apmt.musicoterapia@gmail.com

Postal address: Rua Freitas Gazul, 34, loja 5 - 1350-149 Lisboa - Portugal

Phone: 351-93-324-2678

Training programmes

There are currently two music therapy training programmes in Portugal. These operate at graduate level and one of them offers a degree diploma.

- ❑ Universidade Lusíada de Lisboa – Master’s Degree Programme. Four semesters, 120 ECTS. Coordinator: Teresa Leite. Information: www.lis.ulusiada.pt
- ❑ Instituto Politécnico do Porto – Escola Superior de Educação – Specialisation Graduate Programme. Three semesters. Coordinators: Graça Mota and Patricia Sabbatella. Information: www.esse.ipp.pt

SELECTED LINKS

- ❑ Active Music Therapy Master’s Programme: www.lis.ulusiada.pt/pt-pt/cursos/2014-2015/2%C2%BAciclo%E2%80%93mestrados/musicoterapia.aspx
- ❑ Portuguese Music Therapy Association (APMT): www.apmtmusicoterapia.com

SELECTED REFERENCES²

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² The only Portuguese-based music therapy publication is a compilation of articles issued by the APMT at the time of the Pre-Congress of 1997 for the EMTC. This publication was entitled *Cadernos de Musicoterapia*. Aside from this publication, several articles have been published in academic journals and mainstream magazines about the therapeutic use of music and its application in the field of education.