people went abroad to obtain a degree, others trained on an autodidactic level. Thus, autodidactic pioneers such as Urs Voerkel, Fritz Hegi, Maja Rüdzüli Voerke, Johanna Spalinger, Madeleine Müller, Marie Thérèse Comte as well as music therapists trained in Vienna such as Verena Keller, Randi Coray, Isabelle Mangold Balmer and Sandra Lutz Hochreutener played an important role in the establishment process of modern music therapy in Switzerland. At the beginning of the 1980s their engagement finally led to the foundation of the first Swiss training courses (one in French and one in German) as well as to the bilingual Swiss Music Therapy Association.

**RECOGNITION AND APPROVAL**

State recognition of music therapy as a registered health profession is not yet achieved in Switzerland. However, music therapy has gained broader recognition over the past 30 years. At the present time, only one of the four training courses leads to a title recognised on a federal level (see below).

**IMPORTANT STEPS IN THE RECOGNITION PROCESS**

In 1981 the national bilingual Swiss Music Therapy Association (SFMT/ASMT Schweizerischer Fachverband für Musiktherapie / Association Suisse de Musicothérapie) was founded. Today it counts approximately 192 fully accredited members and 48 associated members (not entirely fulfilling membership criteria) and seven patrons (supporters). SFMT/ASMT safeguards the interests of its members and can act as their representative with government authorities, health insurances and institutions in cases of conflict. It organises a national, bilingual continuing professional development event once a year.

Since 1980 five private training programmes have been founded. In 2003 one of them became a government-supported programme on a university level at Zurich University of the Arts; the title offered (MAS Klinische Musiktherapie ZFH) has been recognised and protected on a federal level since 2006.

Since 2006 Zurich University of the Arts offers a five-year part time postgraduate music therapy training for medical doctors and psychologists (MA level) leading to the qualification as ‘music-psychotherapist’ (‘Musik-Psychotherapeut’). This qualification is recognised by the Swiss Charter of Psychotherapy (Schweizer Chartra für Psychotherapie) as an independent qualification in psychotherapy and is mentioned in the new law on psychological professions (Psychologieberufe-Gesetz), valid since January 2013 (wwwpsychotherapiecharta.chcharts).

Also, since 2011 music therapists can pass an exam to obtain a title as “art therapist, specialised in music

---

1 Music therapist MAS SFMT; Swiss country delegate to the European Music Therapy Confederation (EMTC).

Email: musictherapy@emtc.ch

2 Only music therapists who are also trained psychologists or medical doctors can obtain this title.
**Therapy**: However, this title does not correspond to EMTC standards (university level), but is recognised on a federal level (see [www.kskv-casat.ch](http://www.kskv-casat.ch)).

**Training situation**

It was not until the 1980s that the first private training course was founded in Switzerland. Today, there are five postgraduate training programmes; four in German, one in French.

All trainings last four years and are on a part-time basis. Depending on the programme, candidates have to have previous professional qualifications (BA level or higher) in a related domain (i.e. music, medicine, psychology, education or nursing). Furthermore, experience in personal psychotherapy and/or music therapy as well as music and improvisation skills are requirements for admission. All five programmes demand an important financial contribution from the student. For these reasons, some candidates choose to go abroad, thus getting their training at a younger age and avoiding high expenses.

Only one Swiss training programme (Zurich University of the Arts) is situated at university level leading to a Master of Advanced Studies in Clinical Music Therapy. The programme corresponds to the international European Music Therapy Confederation (EMTC) training standards. The title obtained (MAS ZFH in Klinischer Musiktherapie) is a protected title on a federal level. The four other training programmes operate on a private basis and lead to private diplomas. However, the Zurich University of the Arts offers an upgrade programme leading to the Master of Advanced Studies for music therapists with BA (or equivalent) music therapy diplomas on a private basis. During the last few years, this upgrade programme has not only attracted experienced Swiss music therapists, but also colleagues from neighbouring countries searching for a higher qualification.

Today, there is no doctoral programme in music therapy in Switzerland.

**SELECTED LINKS**

- EMTC country information: [http://emtc-eu.com/country-reports/switzerland/](http://emtc-eu.com/country-reports/switzerland/)
- Swiss Association for Music Therapy (SFMT/ASMT): [www.musictherapy.ch](http://www.musictherapy.ch)

**SELECTED REFERENCES**


