



## SWITZERLAND

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### I. Situation of the Profession

#### History and Development

Since the official beginnings in Switzerland over 40 years ago, Psychomotor Therapy (PMT) has gained increasing recognition from the medical profession and the public.

The first PMT training course was introduced in the French-speaking part of Switzerland at the University of Geneva in 1964. Prof J. de Ajuriaguerra lent his support to S. Naville's initiative and together they established a PMT section in the newly-opened Child Psychiatry Department of Geneva's University Hospital.

Lengthy negotiations followed and resulted in the opening of a second training institution in Zurich, providing an opportunity to study PMT in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. This was thanks to help from the "Heilpädagogisches Seminar" which is now the "Hochschule für Heilpädagogik (University of Remedial Education).

With significant support from renowned pediatricians, the PMT is becoming increasingly popular. To satisfy the growing demand, was in Basel from 1989 - 2010 another educational institution offering the PMT formation.

Since 1970 PMT has been classified as a career in remedial education – an area which is strongly linked with schools. As well as its involvement in the education sector, PMT has become more and more important in the medical field.

Therapists in the French- and Italian-speaking parts of Switzerland are working increasingly with people of all ages including infants, young children, pregnant women and pensioners. Recognition of PMT by a number of health insurance companies means that private practices can also support this therapy.

#### Psychomotor / Professional Organisations

In 1972, 34 former women students of Geneva University founded the astp – Association Suisse des Thérapeutes de la Psychomotricité (Swiss Association of Psychomotor Therapists). The astp, which boasts more than 700 members, has the following goals:

- Support for members on employment issues and working conditions
- adherence to ethical guidelines
- co-operation with other professional organisations.

The astp publishes a quarterly magazine the "Bulletin" in German and French, and also has a website [www.astp.ch](http://www.astp.ch). This together with the website [www.psychomotoriktherapie.ch](http://www.psychomotoriktherapie.ch) and other printed material serves to increase public awareness of the work of psychomotor therapists.



## II. Education

In order to train as a psychomotor therapist, candidates must have completed secondary school, a related training course and have some practical experience such as a period of social work.

The courses offered by Switzerland's two government-approved formation institutes in Zurich ([www.hfh.ch](http://www.hfh.ch), 180 ECTS) and Geneva (<http://www.hes-so.ch>, 180 ECTS) are full-time studies (a minimum of 2500 hours) and take three years. Training is based on education (upbringing and learning) remedial education (disabilities), psychology (behaviour, development, relationships) and medicine (illnesses, disorders).

The development of personal skills such as music, drawing, painting and movement form an important part of training. Depending on the institution, students also touch on related professions such as breathing therapy, Shiatsu, theatre, movement analysis and dance therapy.

## III. Practice

Although practice varies throughout the 26 Swiss cantons, the majority of patients are children. In many cantons, psychomotor therapy is offered in schools alongside speech therapy and psychology services.

Patients are noticeable because of the way they move, their lack of concentration, learning difficulties, and social behaviour. Unable to express themselves, they often suffer from a lack of self confidence. They attend therapy individually or in small groups, on average once a week for two years. Therapy takes place in rooms specially equipped with a climbing wall, ropes, cloth, sponge cubes, balls, hoops, soft toys, paining utensils and games to encourage fine motor movement.

Psychomotor therapists are becoming increasingly involved in training – organising graphomotor courses for teachers as well as workshops for parents and carers. Therapist positions have been created in Geneva within the framework of Service Santé de La Jeunesse (Youth Health Service) an institution which works closely with pre-school crèches.

In the Italian part of Switzerland and certain other areas, therapists work on a private basis with children and adults who have psychosocial adaptation difficulties. Some hospitals and specialised homes also provide PMT.

The psychomotor therapy profession is governed by the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education. Reimbursement of treatment fees depends on the canton, the reason for the therapy and whether the patient is a child or an adult. Costs are borne partially or in full, by:

- canton, local authority or school
- some health insurance companies' complementary insurance
- patients themselves



### **IV. Legislation**

Psychomotoric therapy is part of the Swiss education system and is recognised by the EDK (Swiss Conference of Cantonal Education Ministers) as an offer in both standard and special schools.

Education; [www.edk.ch](http://www.edk.ch)