

SWITZERLAND

I. Situation of the profession

History and Development

In the last 40 years Psychomotor Therapy (PMT) has gained increasing recognition from the medical and educational professions as well as from the public.

In 1964 the first PMT training course took place in the French speaking part of Switzerland at the University of Geneva. Prof Julian de Ajuriaguerra gave his support to Suzanne Naville's pioneering effort 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 facility in Zurich, providing an opportunity to study PMT in the German speaking part of Switzerland. This could be realized thanks to the help of the "Heilpädagogisches Seminar" now the "Hochschule für Heilpädagogik" (University of Remedial Education).

PMT has become increasingly popular thanks to significant support from renowned paediatricians. To satisfy the growing demand, an additional educational institution offering the PMT training was established in Basel in 1989. and lasted until 2010.

Since 1970 PMT has been classified as a career in remedial education – an area which is strongly linked to the educational system. Lately PMT has become more and more important in the medical field. Therapists in the French and Italian speaking parts of Switzerland are working more and more with people of all ages including infants, young children, pregnant women and seniors. Recognition of PMT by certain health insurance companies through supplementary insurance provides access to this therapy through private practitioners.

Psychomotor Professional Organisation

In 1972 a small group of psychomotor therapists from Geneva founded the Swiss Association of Psychomotor Therapists. Thanks to great work and perseverance, they quickly gained new members, enlarged the association, found partners and consolidated our profession through skillful negotiation. Almost fifty years later, the association presents itself as a solid organisation and a recognised player in the field of education and health. In 2013, the association strengthened its presence with the new name "Psychomotorik Schweiz/Psychomotricité Suisse/Psicomotricità Svizzera" and a modern visual identity. It represents more than 900 members from all regions of Switzerland.

The Swiss Psychomotor Association has systematically developed into a recognised negotiating partner in the education and health sectors. It represents the profession of psychomotor therapists with the interests of its members towards authorities, contractual partners, politicians and the public. It operates at national, regional and cantonal level.

Goals of Psychomotorik Schweiz are:

- Expansion: Psychomotorik Schweiz is committed to ensuring and expanding access to the services of psychomotor therapists - in the interests of society.
- Optimization: In order to position itself competently and to master future challenges, the association strives for an ongoing professionalization of its association activities.

There are four strategies to achieve the goals:

- Targeted public relations work to disseminate the expertise of psychomotor therapists and to influence important decisions in education and health care

- Clear and transparent communication to members, contractors, authorities and the public
- The quality of the profession and the services provided by psychomotor therapists
- Cooperation with educational institutions and professional associations of the education and health sectors.

Psychomotorik Schweiz publishes a magazine – the “Bulletin” – once a year. The website www.psychomotorik-schweiz.ch and other printed materials serve to increase public awareness of the work of psychomotor therapists.

II. Education

Degrees can be obtained at two universities of applied sciences in Switzerland:

Haute École de Travail Social (www.hesge.ch), Geneva:

Master of Science HES-SO en Psychomotricité

Recognition of the professional title "Thérapeute en psychomotricité CDIP" in preparation.

Interkantonale Hochschule für Heilpädagogik (www.hfh.ch), Zurich:

Bachelor of Arts HfH in Psychomotoriktherapie

Dipl. Psychomotoriktherapeutin (EDK) / Dipl. Psychomotoriktherapeut (EDK)

The Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK) recognises foreign diplomas in psychomotor therapy on request (www.edk.ch).

Pillars of the psychomotor curriculum

- A close connection between theory and practice
- Internships in various fields of activity
- Theoretical and methodological knowledge from psychomotricity and reference sciences
- Scientific work and applied research

Further information on the course contents is available on the websites of the educational institutions:

Interkantonale Hochschule für Heilpädagogik, Zurich

<https://www.hfh.ch/de/ausbildung/ba-psychomotoriktherapie>

Haute école de travail social, Geneva

<https://www.hesge.ch/hets/formation-base/master-science-hes-so-en-psychomotricite>

Qualification

Recognized by the EDK, a trained psychomotor therapist can diagnose psychomotor impairments and delays; plan, implement and evaluate support and therapy measures.

III. Practice

Psychomotor therapists usually work in schools, schools for special education, kindergardens, day-care centres, hospitals, old people's homes, outpatient clinics or in health services. They can also open their own practice and be self-employed.

The clientele of psychomotor therapy includes people of all ages with motor, sensory, emotional and social developmental problems or impairments. Frequently a combined symptomatology of motor difficulties with one, two or more other symptoms occurs. Often children and adolescents with medical diagnoses such as circumscribed developmental disorders of motor functions (UEMF), autism spectrum

disorders (ASD) or attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) are also assigned to psychomotor therapy.

The majority of clients are children with various forms of practice throughout the 26 Swiss cantons. Mostly psychomotor therapy is offered in schools and schools for special education alongside speech therapy and psychology services. Psychomotor therapy is generally financed partly or fully by

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

IV. Legislation

Article 62 of the Federal Constitution states that the cantons shall ensure sufficient basic and special education. Psychomotor therapy is anchored as an offer in the educational legislation of all cantons, usually at primary school and in the special education sector. The intercantonal agreement on cooperation in the field of special needs education stipulates that psychomotor therapy is part of the basic offer which guarantees the education and care of children and young people aged 0-20 years with special educational needs. The education and the profession of psychomotor therapy is recognized by the EDK.

In some cantons, psychomotor therapy is also anchored in the Health Act. In the health sector, certain health insurance companies provide payments for all age groups through supplementary insurance.