

REPORT ON MUSIC THERAPY IN AUSTRIA | Monika Geretsegger

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1 MUSIC THERAPY IN AUSTRIA – A BRIEF HISTORY

The beginnings of music therapy in Austria date back to the late 1950s, making Austria one of the pioneering countries for music therapy in Europe (Gold, 2003). At that time, violinist Editha Koffer-Ullrich and Hans Sittner, president of the Viennese Academy of Music, joined forces in paving the way to implement music therapy in Vienna both academically and clinically (Mössler, 2008a). Koffer-Ullrich had previously attended a music therapy course and visited music therapy institutions in hospitals in the United States, and subsequently started to work clinically as a music therapist in Vienna, collaborating with eminent physicians in the fields of mental health such as Andreas Rett. From the year 1957 on, music therapy was implemented in departments of psychiatry and in the care of people with special needs as a new therapeutic approach helping to reduce isolation in patients and to foster social rehabilitation (Mössler, 2011a).

According to historical research on the roots of music therapy in Austria (Fitzthum, 2003), important influences contributing to the early theoretical background of music therapy as practiced and taught in Vienna reach back to times well before the Second World War; they include the *life reform movement* of the early 20th century with its emancipatory power, a holistic and humanistic concept of man, the idea of dialogue being essential for the development of every human being, and free improvisation as for example carried out in dancing classes at that time.

In 1959, the first music therapy training course, headed by Koffer-Ullrich, opened at what was then the Vienna Academy of Music (now the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna). Pioneers of what is now called the “Viennese School of Music Therapy” (e.g., Illner & Smetana, 2011; Lanzendorfer, 2007; Mössler, 2007, 2008a, 2011a; Storz & Oberegelsbacher, 2001) included Albertine Wesecky, Ilse Castelliz, Georg Weinhengst, Margit Schneider, Stella Mayr, and Alfred Schmölz, each developing their own theory constructions and ways of working.

Schmölz later went on to become the leader of the training programme for the period from 1970 until 1992, during which time the course’s theoretical and practical backgrounds were changing as for example reflected in a differentiation of active music therapy methods, an increasing emphasis on the therapeutic relationship, and introducing music therapy in the field of psychosomatics (Mössler, 2011b). During the 1990s, the training programme underwent still further changes, both formal and content-related: turning into a six-semester course with a curriculum built upon the three pillars, theory, practice under supervision in several fields, and self-experience (including 90 hours

individual and 180 hours group training music therapy), a definite emphasis was placed on psychodynamic and humanistic approaches within music therapy (Mössler, 2011a); this was also reflected in the fact that many of the lecturers were trained psychotherapists in addition to their professional identity as music therapists.

In 2003, the music therapy programme at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna was turned into an eight-semester, full academic training with a master-equivalent degree (Gold, 2003). Mössler (2007) describes its graduates and students as the “third generation” of music therapists, taught by “second generation” teachers, practitioners and researchers who in turn were students of the “pioneer generation”. New university regulations introduced in 2003 permit the establishment of PhD-level training in music therapy which however still waits to be implemented.

Today, child and adolescent psychiatrist and music therapist Thomas Stegemann heads the Viennese music therapy training course, naming the areas of personality development (training therapy and practicums), musical training, and music therapy methods and techniques based on scientific findings as the programme’s defining characteristics (Wilscher, 2011).

Over the last few decades, a few other smaller music therapy training courses came and went (Gold, 2003); section 2.2, *LIST OF CURRENT TRAINING COURSES*, displays contact details for the three programmes that today form the training landscape of music therapy in Austria: in addition to the Vienna course, this includes a programme leading to a bachelor-equivalent certificate at the University of Arts in Graz/Styria established in 2010, and the music therapy programme at the IMC University of Applied Sciences in Krems/Lower Austria, where a six-semester bachelor programme started in 2009, and a master programme starts in 2012.

The training programme which is now located in Krems has its roots in what had started as “School for Traditional Oriental Music and Art Therapy”, founded by Gerhard Tucek in collaboration with Turkish psychologist Oruç Güvenç in 1989, taking up a traditional system of knowledge and musical treatment that was practiced as an Islamic art of healing in hospitals over one thousand years ago (Tucek, 2006). In 1999, the Institute for Ethno Music Therapy was established by Tucek, and several efforts were made to transfer and adapt the original concept to fit local conditions both in terms of training and clinical requirements, for example in areas such as intensive care, neurorehabilitation, or stress regulation (Tucek, 2011). The music therapy approach taught at the IMC University of Applied Sciences Krems today incorporates findings from medical, psychological and music therapy research as well as concepts and ideas from the field of social and cultural anthropology. The programme is headed by social and cultural anthropologist and music therapist Gerhard Tucek.

The youngest of the current three training programmes in Austria is a course located at the University of Arts Graz, conducted as a cooperative project together with the Medical University of Graz and the University of Graz. It is based on a humanistic-anthropological idea of health and has a bio-psycho-socio-spiritual background, integrating music therapy concepts with musical-artistic, psychological and psychotherapeutic approaches (cf. <http://www.empg.at/gramuth/>). The steering committee consists of physician, psychotherapist and music therapist Monika Glawischnig-Goschnik, social pedagogue and music therapist Christian Münzberg, and psychiatrist, psychotherapist and music therapist Urs Rüegg.

2 MUSIC THERAPY IN AUSTRIA – THE CURRENT PICTURE

2.1 MUSIC THERAPY AS A RECOGNISED HEALTH PROFESSION

Today, music therapy is practiced in many sectors of the health care system in Austria. In a recent survey conducted by the Austrian Association of Music Therapists (Geretsegger, Böhm-Öppinger, & Schmidtmayr, 2012), we found that adult mental health is by far the largest field of work, comprising 30,5 % of all music therapy employments in Austria when adults with psychiatric and psychosomatic disorders are taken together; 24,6 % of all music therapy employments in Austria are in the treatment of children and adolescents with developmental disorders, behavioural problems and psychiatric disorders. Other large client groups for music therapists in Austria are people with mental and/or physical handicaps (11,2 %) and the elderly/people in hospices (10,7 %). Figure 1 gives an overview of the employment percentages for these and other areas of work.

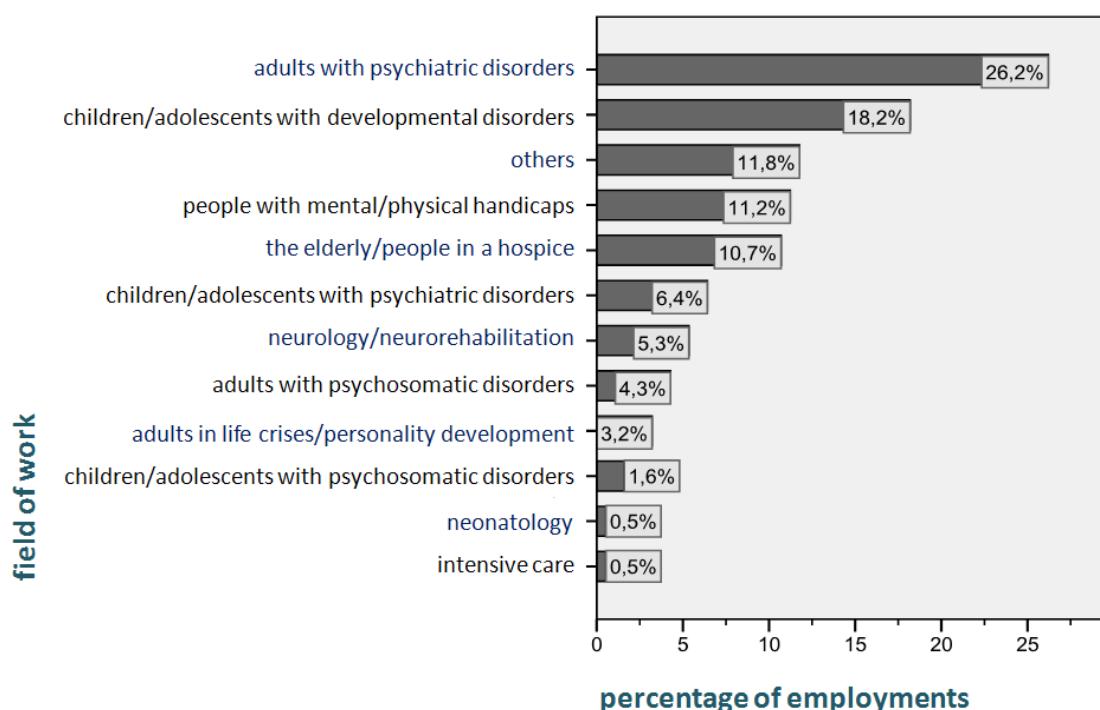


Fig. 1: Distribution of music therapy employments in Austria across different areas of work; data taken from a survey conducted in 2011, n = 131 (adapted from Geretsegger, Böhm-Öppinger, & Schmidtmayr, 2012).

More than a quarter (26,8 %) of all Austrian music therapy employments can be found in hospitals, followed by the categories private practice (22,3 %), and outpatient clinic (15,0 %); see figure 2.

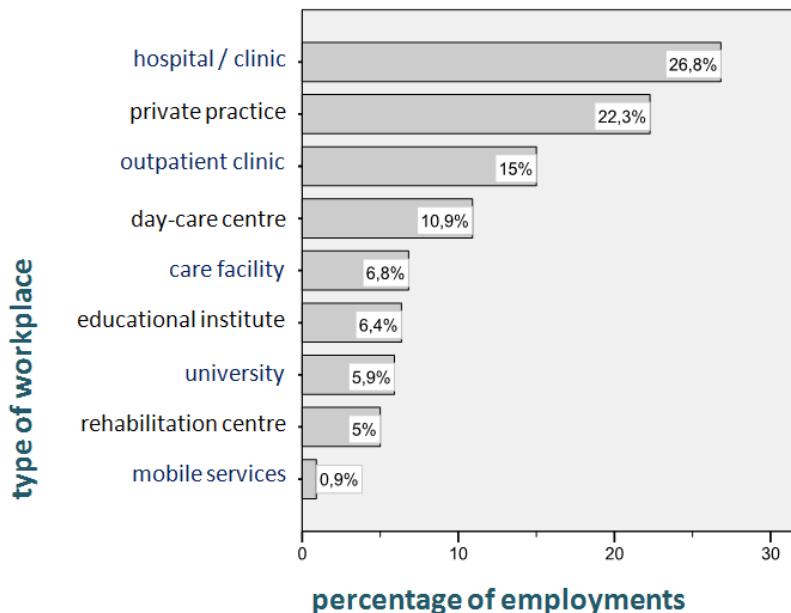


Fig. 2: Distribution of music therapy employments in Austria in relation to types of workplace; data taken from a 2011 survey, n = 131 (adapted from Geretsegger, Böhm-Öppinger, & Schmidtmayr, 2012).

Since the Music Therapy Law came into force on July 1, 2009, after a decades-long process of efforts and negotiations to gain state recognition and a unanimous parliamentary vote in June 2008 (Mössler, 2008b), music therapy is now one of the legally regulated health professions in Austria, making the country one of the few in the world where the music therapy profession is officially recognised. The Music Therapy Law defines two types of professional qualification: music therapists who are entitled to work independently (based on a master qualification in music therapy), and those who have a jointly responsible occupational qualification (based on a bachelor qualification in music therapy). Music therapists in Austria have to fulfil certain criteria (regarding training, occupational duties, etc.) to be registered in the official Music Therapists List run by the Ministry of Health. At the time of writing this report (July 2012), there are 261 music therapists in Austria, only two of them listed as having a jointly responsible occupational qualification (cf. the Music Therapists List at <http://musiktherapie.ehealth.gv.at/>). For a summary of key contents and characteristics of the Austrian Music Therapy Law, see Mössler (2008b).

The aforementioned survey (Geretsegger, Böhm-Öppinger, & Schmidtmayr, 2012) indicates that the majority of music therapy posts (64,5 %) is located in the east of the country, that is to say around the larger area of the capital, in the states of Vienna and Lower Austria; about 22 % of Austrian music therapists are male, and the average age of music therapists in Austria is currently at around 41 years.

64,6 % of all survey respondents declared having at least one other occupational qualification in addition to their music therapy training, and 53,6 % stated that they were working as a music therapist in more than one workplace at the time of the survey; the average amount of time working as a music therapist was at 25,2 hours per week.

At present, no solid data are available revealing the training backgrounds of music therapists working in Austria today; however, anecdotal evidence together with information from the member database of the Austrian Association of Music Therapists suggests that the largest group of Austrian music therapists was trained in Vienna, followed by music therapists with a traditional oriental or ethno music therapy training, complemented by a number of music therapists having graduated from various training programmes in Germany, Switzerland, Italy, or the UK.

2.2 LIST OF CURRENT TRAINING COURSES

University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna:

Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien, Abteilung Musiktherapie
Rennweg 8, A-1030 Vienna, Austria
<http://www.mdw.ac.at/mbm/mth/>

Head: Thomas Stegemann

T: ++43 1 711 55-3901

E: stegemann@mdw.ac.at, E: Lahner@mdw.ac.at (Secretary, Renate Lahner)

University of Arts Graz:

Grazer Ausbildung Musiktherapie, Kunsthochschule Graz, Institut für Musikpädagogik
Leonhardstrasse 82-84, A-8010 Graz, Austria
<http://www.empg.at/gramuth/>

Heads: Monika Glawischnig-Goschnik / Christian Münzberg / Urs Rüegg

E: musiktherapie@kug.ac.at

IMC University of Applied Sciences Krems:

IMC Fachhochschule Krems GesmbH

A-3500 Krems, Austria

<http://www.fh-krems.ac.at/de/studieren/bachelor/musiktherapie/uebersicht/>

<http://www.fh-krems.ac.at/de/studieren/master/musiktherapie/uebersicht/>

Head: Gerhard Tucek

T : ++43 2732 802-367

E: gerhard.tucek@fh-krems.ac.at

2.3 DOCTORAL RESEARCH IN MUSIC THERAPY¹

Due to a lack of doctoral/PhD training courses in music therapy in Austria up to now (July 2012), Austrian music therapists have been pursuing doctoral studies focusing on music therapy in Hamburg/Germany and Aalborg/Denmark as well as at other faculties/universities in Vienna.

¹ The author would like to thank Elena Fitzthum for providing information for this section (also see the country report for Austria on the website of the European Music Therapy Confederation at <http://emtc-eu.com/country-reports/austria/> which was written by Elena Fitzthum, including some feedback from this report's author on an earlier version).

The list below gives an overview of completed and ongoing doctoral dissertations in the field of music therapy conducted by music therapists who were trained in Austria:

Dorothea Oberegelsbacher conducted an investigation into effects of group music therapy for mentally handicapped women for her doctorate degree in psychology at the University of Vienna (Oberegelsbacher, 1993).

Dorothee Storz developed a model of focused short-term music therapy in psychiatry (Storz, 2003); doctoral training in musicology at the Hamburg University of Music and Theatre.

Elena Fitzthum did historical research on the roots of Austrian music therapy before 1959 (Fitzthum, 2003; Fitzthum & Gruber, 2003); doctoral training in musicology at the Hamburg University of Music and Theatre.

Gerhard Tucek investigated roots and further developments of Traditional Oriental Music Therapy (Tucek, 2003); doctoral degree in cultural and social anthropology from the University of Vienna.

Christian Gold did empirical research on the efficacy and effectiveness of music therapy in the field of psychiatry as part of his PhD training in music therapy at Aalborg University (e.g., Gold, Wigram, & Berger, 2001; Gold, Voracek, & Wigram, 2004).

Karin Mössler investigated the theoretical and methodological development of the Viennese School of Music Therapy (Mössler, 2008a); doctoral training in musicology at the Hamburg University of Music and Theatre.

Monika Smetana conducted a qualitative study investigating the meaning of musical objects in music therapy with adolescents suffering from structural disorders (Smetana, 2011); PhD training at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, Institute for Music Education.

Gabriela Wesenauer investigates aspects of psychosexuality in individual music therapy with children and adolescents; doctoral training at the Hamburg University of Music and Theatre.

Edith Wiesmüller's thesis focuses on music therapy with adults who are suffering from complex posttraumatic stress disorder (cPTSD) and includes quantitative and qualitative data; doctoral training at the Hamburg University of Music and Theatre since 2009.

Monika Geretsegger conducts a randomised controlled trial on effects of improvisational music therapy for children with autism spectrum disorders in Vienna which also forms part of an international multi-centre study (Geretsegger, Holck, & Gold, 2012); PhD training at the Doctoral Programme in Music Therapy at Aalborg University since 2010.

2.4 ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANISATIONS

The **Austrian Association of Music Therapists [Österreichischer Berufsverband der MusiktherapeutInnen, ÖBM]** was founded in 1984. As of July 2012, the ÖBM has 259 members, 39 of which are student members.

The ÖBM board consists of six full board members and one students' representative, all of them serving in an honorary capacity. Monika Geretsegger is the current chair of the ÖBM board.

Since its foundation, the ÖBM's main goals have been representing the interests of music therapists working in Austria and reaching recognition for music therapy within the Austrian health care system.

Today, the association's main goals cover the representation of its members regarding all profession-related matters; information and services for members and everyone interested in music therapy by hosting and continuously updating the association's webpage, office hours for questions and support, regular email newsletters, and the ÖBM journal sent to members four times a year; organisation of workshops, seminars, symposia, congresses, and the lecture series "ÖBM Jour fixe" (continuously running since 1999, three to four times a year); job service; collaboration with associations of other health care professionals as well as with music therapy organisations and training courses in Austria and abroad; facilitation of professional exchange; and promotion of music therapy research.

ÖBM is a member of the "Gesundheitsberufekonferenz" (a consortium of associations of Austria's recognised health professions), of the European Music Therapy Confederation (EMTC), and of the World Federation of Music Therapy (WFMT).

As part of its event organisation activities, ÖBM hosted the annual meetings of the EMTC in Vienna together with the Viennese Institute of Music Therapy (WIM) in May 2009 and May 2011. Together with the WIM and the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, and supported by the training courses in Krems and Graz as well as by the Association of (Ethno) Music Therapy, ÖBM submitted a proposal to host the 10th European Music Therapy Conference in Vienna in July 2016, which was unanimously accepted by the EMTC delegates at their general assembly in Tallinn, Estonia, in June 2012.

Contact details:

ÖBM – Österreichischer Berufsverband der MusiktherapeutInnen, Meravigliagasse 1/25,
A-1060 Vienna, Austria
<http://www.oebm.org>
T: ++43 699 10654741
FAX: ++43 1 5951180
E: info@oebm.org (Secretary ÖBM, Eva Phan Quoc)
E: vorsitz@oebm.org (Chair ÖBM, Monika Geretsegger)

The **Association of (Ethno) Music Therapy [Berufsverband für (Ethno-) Musiktherapie, BfEM]** was founded in 2010. A paper brochure issued in November 2011 (Berufsverband für (Ethno-) Musiktherapie, 2011) states that it originated from what was initially established as Association for Art and Music Therapy in Austria in 1994 and had been out of service for a long

time; activities mentioned include organisation of information and further education events and congresses, publication and dissemination of scientific papers on music therapy, and cooperation with people and organisations of similar interests. BfEM's website is still under development at the time of writing this report. According to its current chair, I. Stiglmair (personal communication, October 28, 2011), the association has about 20 members.

The BfEM is a member of the World Federation of Music Therapy (WFMT).

In November 2012, it was announced that the BfEM will host the 14th World Congress of Music Therapy in Krems in July 2014 (congress chair: Gerhard Tucek).

Contact details:

BfEM – Berufsverband für (Ethno-) Musiktherapie, Lerchenfeldergürtel 29/18,
A-1160 Vienna, Austria

<http://bfem.at>

E: stiglmair.bfem@gmx.at (Chair BfEM, Iris Stiglmair)

The **Viennese Institute of Music Therapy [Wiener Institut für Musiktherapie, WIM]**, founded in 1997, is a private institute currently comprising seven members who are involved in practical clinical work as well as in theoretical and scientific work.

The institute's purposes include supporting and evolving theory construction of the "Viennese School of Music Therapy", promoting music therapy as an autonomous profession, and providing further training events in music therapy. The WIM has also created a series of books, "Wiener Beiträge zur Musiktherapie" [Viennese contributions to music therapy] published by Edition Praesens/Vienna, which describes the "Viennese School of Music Therapy", its tradition, clinical practice, research, and the integration of new theories; to date, nine books have been published in this series. The WIM board, currently chaired by Elena Fitzthum, consists of three members.

The WIM is a member of the European Music Therapy Confederation (EMTC).

Together with the ÖBM and the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, the WIM will host the 10th European Music Therapy Conference in July 2016.

Contact details:

WIM – Wiener Institut für Musiktherapie, Praterstrasse 30/7, A-1020 Vienna, Austria

<http://www.wim-musiktherapie.at>

E: wim.kontakt@gmail.com

E: fitzthum@aon.at (Chair WIM, Elena Fitzthum)

The **Institute for Ethno Music Therapy [Institut für Ethno-Musiktherapie]** was founded by Gerhard Tucek in 1999. According to its website (cf. <http://www.ethnomusik.com/>), the institute's purposes include developing the therapeutic potential of music from different cultural backgrounds

based on practical applications in scientifically grounded ways, and acting as an expert organisation with regards to culture-sensitive practices in music therapy training, clinical practice and research. The Institute for Ethno Music Therapy is headed by Gerhard Tucek. On its webpage, several events and conventions are listed through which the Institute for Ethno Music Therapy seeks to build bridges between music therapy, music medicine, and research on the effects of music in general (e.g., the “Mozart&Science” congresses in 2006, 2008, 2010, and 2012).

Contact details:

Institut für Ethno-Musiktherapie, Bergstrasse 28, A-3542 Gföhl, Austria

<http://www.ethnomusik.com/>

T: ++43 2716 76 950

E: info@ethnomusik.com

2.5 FURTHER RESOURCES

Music Therapy Law (in German):

<http://www.bmg.gv.at/cms/home/attachments/9/7/1/CH1168/CMS1296735910034/musiktherapiigesetz.pdf>

Music Therapists List: <http://musiktherapie.ehealth.gv.at/>

English information about the Federal Ministry of Health:

<http://www.bmg.gv.at/home/EN/Topics/>

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