

# Switzerland

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## Snapshot

### Area

41,285 square kilometers; situated in Central Western Europe

### Population

7,639,961 million people (Spring, 2011 est.)

### Official Language

German, French, Italian, and Rhaeto-Romansh

### Ethnic Groups

German 65%, French 18%, Italian 10%, Romansh 1% and other 6%

### Median Age

41.7 (2011 est.)

### Children under 5

366.000 (2009 estimate)

### Sources

<http://en.wikipedia.org>  
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>  
[www.unicef.org/info](http://www.unicef.org/info)  
[www.emtc-eu.com](http://www.emtc-eu.com)  
[www.musictherapy.ch](http://www.musictherapy.ch)



**Das Gras wächst nicht schneller, wenn man daran zieht.**

**[The grass does not grow faster if you pull on it.]**

**-Remo Largo**

## Demographics

Encompassing the central Alps, Switzerland is a beautiful small country in Central Western Europe, which consistently ranks high on quality of life indices. According to statistics released by the federal government in 2008, life expectancy stands at 82.1 years for populace and almost all Swiss are literate. Politically, there are 26 cantons that make up Switzerland, each canton with its own constitution, legislature, government and courts. The education system is decentralized and includes four languages. There are currently about 240 members of the *Swiss Music Therapy Association (SMTA)*, of whom about 75 are professionally trained and accredited music therapists.

## Background Information

Due to the diversity of training and clinical practice, SMTA plays an important role and functions as an overarching organization. Founded in 1981, the association aims to link the diverse training programs and promotes music therapy to be recognized as a health profession in Switzerland. Other goals are to guarantee high and consistent professional standards of Swiss music therapists through accreditation as

well as to support music therapy in education, practice, and research. For more information please visit [www.musictherapy.ch](http://www.musictherapy.ch).

State recognition of music therapy as a health profession is still a challenge in Switzerland. However, over the past 20 years music therapy has gained more recognition and acceptance and developed into a more autonomous profession.

Since 1980, five music therapy training programs have been established in Switzerland. One of them was the "Berufsbegleitende Ausbildung Musiktherapie bam," which is now integrated in the Master of Advanced Studies in Clinical Music Therapy at the Zurich University of the Arts. The four additional training programs operate on a private basis.

Swiss music therapists work with infants, young children, adolescents and their families in various settings including neonatal intensive care units, children's hospitals, psychiatric hospitals, rehabilitation clinics, early intervention and special education settings, schools, music schools, hospices as well as in private practice. As in Switzerland, "therapeutic pedagogy" plays an important role in the education system, many Swiss music therapists work in therapeutic pedagogy settings.

Several supplementary health insurances cover a good portion of the costs of music therapy in private practice. In outpatient settings, physicians, counselors, and (school) psychologists refer clients to music therapists, and parents can register their children for music therapy, too. This is one reason why, compared to other European countries, a large number of music therapy private practices exist and the salaries of Swiss music therapists are generally higher, although part-time positions are still most common.

## Common Approaches

In Switzerland, active as well as receptive music therapy is provided in individual and group music therapy settings. Applied music therapy as well as the training programs work by involving several directions to link different philosophies and approaches. Music therapists in Switzerland apply instrumental and vocal improvisations, song creations, role-play, body-centered music games, and guided imagery methods. Swiss music therapy with children is based on the theoretical framework of developmental psychologists such as Daniel Stern, the Papouseks, John Bowlby, Colwyn Trevarthen, the Swiss child psychiatrist Heinz-Stefan Herzka and the Swiss pediatrician Remo Largo.

## Prominent Publications

- Gindl, B. (2002). *Anklang. Die Resonanz der Seele [Sound. The response of the soul]*. Paderborn: Junfermann.
- Lutz Hochreutener, S. (2009). *Spiel-Musik-Therapie. Methoden der Musiktherapie mit Kindern und Jugendlichen [Play-Music-Therapy. Methods of music therapy with children and adolescents]*. Göttingen, Germany: Hogrefe Verlag.
- Maurer-Joss, S. (2011). *Dem Leben eine Stimme geben. Zur Bedeutung der Stimme in der Musiktherapie mit behinderten und krebserkrankten Kindern [Giving life a voice. The meaning of voice in music therapy for children with disabilities and cancer]*. Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag.

## About the Authors



Friederike Haslbeck, MT-DMtG, Master of music education, Master of music therapy, and special training in NICU music therapy, has worked as music therapist with children, including infants in NICU in Germany since 2001. Currently she is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Wittne/Herdecke in Germany and lives with her family in Zürich, Switzerland.

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Dr. Sandra Lutz Hochreutener, SFMT, SPV/VOPT, Ph.D. in music therapy, Master of pedagogic, is a psychotherapist who has long-standing experiences in pediatric psychiatry. She has also worked with children (and adults) in private practice for 25 years in the greater St. Gallen area in Switzerland. Dr. Lutz Hochreutener is the founder and co-director of the Department of Clinical Music Therapy at the Zurich University of the Arts.

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