

Access to Psychotherapeutic Care in Austria

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Facts

- In 1991 the Psychologists Act and the Psychotherapy Act splitted a profession into two groups and created an unwanted reality in Austria.
- 20 years after the law for psychotherapy: What does help look like in Austria?

Inpatient Care

- Psychotherapeutic healthcare is fully financed by the statutory social insurance system, covering the full range of inpatient care (hospitals, clinics) and semi-inpatient care (day centers).

Outpatient Care Problem: Payment I

- if further treatment is needed you may contact a psychotherapist nearby and ask for an initial consultation.
- The first question would be about money: Do you pay for yourself or do you need a fully paid treatment (=covered by the statutory social health insurance)?

Payment I fully paid treatment



- treatment places are limited
 - big cities/countryside
- the amount of treatment hours is limited per year for each federal state.

It is a basis of „first come, first serve“. If you are diagnosed with a depression in February, you have good chances to get your treatment fully covered. If you get ill in October, fully paid treatment places are regularly exhausted.

Payment II self financed treatment



- the minimum fee for a 50 min one-on-one session (or couple therapy) ranges from 66€ to 132€.
- the costs of a 90min grouptherapy are 25€ to 44€ per person.
- The statutory social insurance is required by law to subsidize every counseling session with at least € 21.80. These dues have not changed since 1992.

Problem 2: Who provides treatment?



■ **Medical Doctors**

- PSY-diplomas:
 - 3 step post graduate education. Psy III entitles you to provide psychotherapy

■ **Psychiatrists/ Paediatric Psychiatrists**

- In 2005 approx. 1200 medical doctors with PSY III diploma were registered
- a diploma for psychotherapeutic medicine is in preparation

Who provides treatment?



■ **Psychologists**

- 37% are trained as Clinical- and/or Health Psychologists.

2010: 6488 registered Clinical- **and/or** Health Psychologists (Number doubled from 2000 – 2010)

- 45% are psychotherapists **only**.
- 18% Clinical and/or Health Psychologists & Psychotherapists

Psychotherapists



- **Psychotherapists** (different accesses to psychotherapy)
- the number of **academic graduates** has **decreased**
 - 1985: 83.2%
 - 2010: 70.0%
- the number of **academic training** has **increased** (master studies for psychotherapy, Sigmund-Freud-University - SFU)

Psychotherapists



- 6910 Psychotherapists
2000 - 2010 the **number increased by 30%**.
- At present BÖP represents approximately 3.900 psychologists and **1000** persons are trained both as Clinical- and/or Health **and** Psychotherapists
- The Association of Psychotherapists (ÖBVP) has approximately 4000 members.
- A membership to both associations is optional.

What does help look like?

- an ordinary patient has no chance to be familiar with all these regulations (and titles).
- the uncertain availability of paid treatment is unacceptable for patients.
- The Psychotherapy Act pretends that all Psychotherapists are equal. In real life the payment by the health system is different, depending on your basic education.

- Austrian „Psychological Psychotherpists“
 - have double qualification
 - went through extensive, self-paid training
 - and are paid inadequateley compared to e.g. medical doctors.
- If you are looking for a good role model:
Don't do it the Austrian way!