

Exodus Utrecht (Waalstraat) - The Netherlands

Introduction

Exodus Utrecht Waalstraat (from now on "Exodus Waalstraat") is located in Utrecht, in the Netherlands. The facility is part of an NGO called "Stichting Exodus Nederland". This organization, established in 1979, is dedicated to the vision of creating a safe society where individuals can construct meaningful lives with new opportunities. They provide a range of services, including forensic protected living for individuals in or formerly in detention.



To fulfill this mission, Exodus maintains eleven houses throughout the Netherlands, with Exodus Waalstraat being one of them. All Exodus houses follow a consistent program and approach. The program focuses primarily on participants who still need significant support during the final stages of their detention or after their release, making them eligible for placement in an Exodus house.

Scale

Exodus Waalstraat can house fourteen residents, classifying it as a small-scale facility.

RESCALED-principles in practice:

- Small-scale
- Differentiated
- Community-integrated

Differentiation

Target group:

Exodus Waalstraat is a mixed-gender facility. To be eligible for Exodus Waalstraat, participants must be 18 years of age or older, with exceptions for persons convicted under adult law at a younger age. These persons must have a (forensic) care requirement regarding aspects such as living, working, relationships and finding a purpose during or after their period of detention. In addition, they must possess a valid identity document or have the right to obtain one. A fundamental requirement is a willingness to stop criminal

behaviour. Furthermore, prospective participants must not have predominant problems of psychiatry, addiction or aggression.

Residents must be motivated to actively participate in the program. This motivation is visible in their willingness to adhere to the mandatory program components, punctuality in keeping appointments and adherence to program rules. They must also be capable of some degree of consultation and open to working on personal growth, behaviour change and learning new skills as needed. Equally important is their willingness to accept guidance and support during their journey.

Forms of security:

Exodus Waalstraat prioritizes relational security as the basis of its security measures. This is ensured by the presence of dedicated social workers in the facility. Throughout the day, one or more social workers have mentoring conversations with participants and maintain communication with key stakeholders, including the probation department. In addition, the team includes a job coach and a team leader, all of whom contribute guidance and supervision during the week. At night, supervision is provided by the night shift, with staff sleeping on-site. In addition to personal supervision, the facility fosters a sense of community through various communal activities, including cooking together, doing sports and special holiday celebrations.

To further enhance security, Exodus Waalstraat uses a range of static security measures. These include 24/7 camera surveillance, the use of an emergency button by staff that can be used to contact a security company's alarm center in case of unsafe situations and locking the front door at night. Participants are given their own keys, allowing them free access to the facility during the day.

In addition, the facility also employs various procedural security measures, such as urine checks and room inspections. On the one hand, these measures can be applied as needed, especially when drug use or criminal activity is suspected. On the other hand, these checks can be a mandatory part of conditions imposed by the probation department on participants.



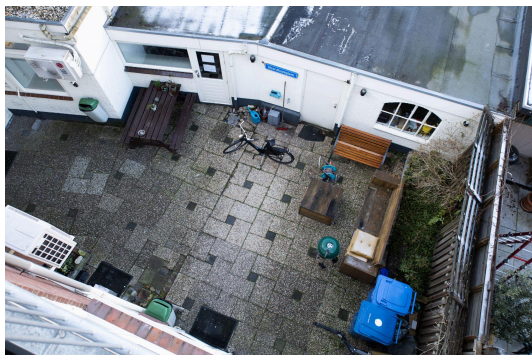
Activities:

Exodus works according to the "Your Power" methodology. In 2015, Exodus underwent an extensive update and refinement of its methodology, conducted in collaboration with Impuls, the Radboud UMC's social care research center. This revised approach places a strong emphasis on the strengths of each participant, which are assessed at the beginning of the program. By guiding participants toward their own recovery, engagement and motivation are fostered to help them rebuild their lives. The mentor plays a crucial role in overseeing the process, providing guidance and offering assistance as needed.

An essential part of successful reintegration into society is building a meaningful daily routine. This may include finding paid work, getting an education or volunteering. If such a routine does not yet exist, Exodus offers support to participants in identifying their unique qualities and interests so they can work toward a fulfilling and purposeful life.

Community-integration

Location and architecture:



Exodus Waalstraat is located in a district in the Southwest of Utrecht. Utrecht is a student city in the Netherlands with approximately 368 000 inhabitants (2023).¹ The facility is situated within a residential area, surrounded by houses and across a public playground. Exodus Waalstraat is a 10-minute walk from a nearby train station in Utrecht.

The facility consists of three different houses connected by a common courtyard. These houses have three floors. On the ground floor of the houses is an office and sleeping area for the staff and on the second and third floors are the bedrooms for the participants and a bathroom. The residents each have their own sleeping room. The living room and kitchen are cosy, as is the courtyard garden. Through the inner garden, you have access to the laundry room.

¹Utrecht (Municipality, Utrecht, Netherlands) - Population Statistics, Charts, Map and Location. (2023). *City Population*. Retrieved November 1st, 2023, from https://www.citypopulation.de/en/netherlands/admin/utrecht/0344__utrecht/

Interaction with the community:

As residents are actively engaged in work or outside activities, they have constant interaction with the community, regularly leaving the facility for various appointments. Therefore, specific on-site activities are not usually organized, as interaction with the community is an inherent and natural part of their routine.

Exodus Utrecht

Waalstraat

Founded: 1995

Capacity: 14

Security level: Low

Nearest city/town: Utrecht

Nature of interaction:

Visited by RJN

(17/05/2022)

Publicity/ read more

- About Foundation Exodus Nederland at the official website of Exodus:
Exodus hulp na detentie. (n.d.). *Exodus*. Retrieved November 1st, 2023, from <https://www.exodus.nl/>
- Document about the houses of Exodus and how they work (in dutch):
Informatieboekje voor (ex-) gedetineerden. (2023). *Exodus*. Retrieved June 21th, 2023, from <https://files.enflow.nl/6ffbb417-1260-4c26-83de-726071701f4b/ae735d93-b6b0-4e31-8967-22c fb77b9e0a/promotiemateriaal/exodus-nederland-infoboekje-def.pdf>