

# Alytus halfway house - Lithuania

## Introduction

Alytus halfway house is located in the city of Alytus, in the south of Lithuania. It is one of nine halfway houses in Lithuania. The halfway houses fall under the jurisdiction of the Lithuanian prison system and their mission is to support reintegration and reduce recidivism. Alytus halfway house was founded in 2016. It has been part of various projects funded by Norway Grants, which were aimed to further develop specific aspects of the prison service.

## Scale

Alytus halfway house can accommodate 20 people which makes it a small-scale facility. When at full-capacity, the facility works with a waiting list.

### RESCALED-principles in practice:

- Small-scale
- Differentiated
- Community-integrated

## Differentiation

### *Target group:*

Alytus halfway house accommodates people who are approaching the end of their sentence. The residents of the halfway house are adult men. Several criteria are taken into account during the selection process for placement. The criteria include exhibiting good behaviour during their time in prison, being motivated for successful reintegration into society, and being within six months of the first date for conditional release. There are also specific contraindications: Individuals convicted of sexual offences or murder are not eligible for placement in these facilities.

### *Forms of security:*

The security measures implemented at Alytus halfway house are primarily focused on dynamic security, which is a significant aspect of the collaborative project between Lithuania and Norway known as the "Development of Quality Based Lithuanian Correctional Service System." As part of this project, Norwegian partners are organizing courses on dynamics between staff and people in detention to introduce and enhance this concept within the Lithuanian prison system.

The static security measures observed at Alytus halfway house are limited to camera surveillance and a card registration system. The facility does not have any walls or fences, but the main entrance is locked. With their personal cards, residents can open the main door and this access is registered in the system. Camera surveillance is used to monitor the entrances, exits and hallways of the facility.

First impression of a visitor: "The building and location of Alytus halfway house were a pleasant surprise. It is an old hotel with the vibe of a hotel or house and no visible security apart from security cameras".

Lastly, the facility has some procedural security measures. For example, residents are obliged to communicate in advance if something changes in their weekly schedule and travel routes. Staff members occasionally conduct random checks to ensure that residents are present at their designated locations by visiting their workplaces and asking them to confirm their presence. Visitors are not allowed inside the Alytus halfway house, but most residents have the freedom to leave the house for visits over the weekend that take place in the local community.

#### *Activities:*

Residents in Alytus halfway house are in control of their own schedule. They have to schedule their appointments in or outside the facility. Most activities do take place in the community and residents can move freely in the community according to their schedule. The weekly schedule consists mostly of working or studying as everyone is obliged to work or study outside the halfway house. Most of the residents work from morning to evening, but it is also allowed to do night or weekend work. During their job search, they can be assisted by employment specialists. Every resident has to follow their individual plan and they have to fill in their free time according to this individual plan. Lastly, the residents are responsible for their grocery shopping and making food themselves.

## **Community-integration**

#### *Location and architecture:*

The halfway house is located in Alytus, a city in Southern Lithuania. The city has an average of 52 727 inhabitants (2021)<sup>1</sup>. The facility is located in the community, within walking distance from the city center. There is also a prison located on the other side of the street. The manager of Alytus halfway house is both the manager of the halfway house and this open unit of the prison.

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<sup>1</sup>Alytus (County, Lithuania) - Population Statistics, Charts, Map and Location. (2021). *City Population*. Retrieved June 16th, 2023, from [https://www.citypopulation.de/en/lithuania/admin/01\\_\\_alytus/](https://www.citypopulation.de/en/lithuania/admin/01__alytus/)

The building of Alytus halfway house was formerly a hotel. The rooms are shared and so are the bathroom, living room, kitchen and garden. The house is decorated homely with plants, paintings, a sofa, a dining table and a fish bowl, among other things.

#### *Interaction with the community:*

The integration between Alytus halfway house and the community has evolved positively over the years, despite initial resistance from the neighbourhood when the facility was first established. After six years of operation, the residents' involvement in community work, such as gardening, has increased the appreciation and support of the neighbours. This positive relationship between the halfway house and the community can serve as a valuable example for the opening of new halfway houses in the future.

Alytus halfway house strongly emphasizes integration by facilitating residents' engagement in various activities outside the facility. Work, education, social programs, healthcare, volunteering opportunities, and sports activities are all provided within the community. This approach allows the residents to actively participate in the community, contribute through paid employment, pay taxes, and make use of the services available outside the halfway house. The integration is not limited to the residents benefiting from community services, as Alytus halfway house also encourages them to contribute back to the community through volunteering work. The local government can request the residents' assistance in various voluntary initiatives.

#### **Alytus Halfway House**

Founded: 2016

Capacity: 20

Security level: Low

Nearest city/town: Alytus  
(Lithuania)

Nature of interaction: Visited  
by RESCALED and Wayback  
(01/12/2022)

#### **Publicity/ read more**

- About the collaborative project between Lithuania and Norway known as the "Development of Quality Based Lithuanian Correctional Service System." on the website of the Lithuanian Prison Service:

Lithuanian Prison Service. (n.d.). *Ongoing projects - Projects*. Retrieved June 15th, 2023, from <http://www.kaldep.lt/en/prison-department/projects/ongoing-projects.html>

- Blogpost about the Alytus Halfway House on the website of the Norway Grants:

EEA Grants. (2016, decembre 22th). *A way back to society*. Retrieved June 15th, 2023, from <https://eeagrants.org/news/way-back-society>