

Emmaus Domstad - The Netherlands

Introduction



Emmaus Domstad is a residential-working community, accommodating people with different needs. Income is provided by the annexed thrift store, to which everyone living in Emmaus contributes, along with many volunteers. This facility is located in Utrecht, a city in the middle of the Netherlands.

Emmaus Domstad is part of the international Emmaus movement. This movement was started by Abbé Pierre in Paris, France in the early 1950s. The basic idea is to bring together people who have experienced exclusion or otherwise. Together they formulate responses to situations of injustice. Group activities around the world share the common goals of social and environmental justice, the development of a truly ethical and inclusive economy, and the movement for universal citizenship. To achieve this goal within the Netherlands, several Emmaus facilities exist with various objectives, one of which is Emmaus Domstad. Each Emmaus community is autonomous and is independent of any external support.

Scale

The maximum capacity of Emmaus Domstad is sixteen people, which makes it a small-scale facility.

RESCALED-principles in practice:

- Small-scale
- Differentiated
- Community-integrated

Differentiation

Target group:

The target group of Emmaus Domstad are people who have experienced exclusion. Emmaus is receptive to the idea of including and housing people in detention or with a history of detention: the latter already happens but not structurally and not in a forensic framework and the facility is not specifically designed for this. Emmaus Domstad does not only focus on people who have been in contact with the law, the target group is much broader. People can come to the living group with various requests for help, mainly in the area of homelessness. At Emmaus Domstad, these people get the chance to take a break and then work on their future, so that after a period of about three years they can stand on their own two feet again. There are also people who choose an Emmaus community because they want to live according to the values and

principles of the Emmaus movement: living, working and sharing. Contra-indications for admission to the facility are an addiction problem or overly severe psychological problems.

At Emmaus Domstad, a possible admission is discussed and carefully considered. The admission of a person in detention or a former person in detention depends on the composition of the community and the background of the person. Whether or not a person wants to live and stay in the community is up to the site coordinator in combination with the desire and ability to accept a new member of the community from the existing members.

Forms of security:

Emmaus Domstad does not use concrete security measures. The facility consists of housing rules that the community and the site coordinator use to regulate the community. Community members consult on compliance with these housing rules, and there is a paid coordinator who is responsible for the intake and departure of community members. Everything revolves around the well-being of community members. There are no other visible forms of static security except video cameras in the thrift store that prevent theft from outside.

Activities:

Housing and a communal way of life are the core elements of Emmaus Domstad. Community members receive housing and a weekly allowance of €60 (pocket money). Residents work in the thrift store and together form the living community and take care of everything needed in it. Work schedules are established for community activities, including cleaning, cooking and tasks in the thrift store, taking into account the competencies of individual residents. Each member actively participates in internal activities and contributes to the general operation of the store. When there is no work in the store, everyone has the freedom to do their own activities. Eating is done collectively.



Community-integration

Location and architecture:



Emmaus Domstad is located in the suburbs of Utrecht, a city in the center of The Netherlands. Utrecht has about 367 951 inhabitants (2023).¹ The facility is located in the middle of a neighborhood that is part of a newly built urban area, which also includes several other social housing facilities

(including resident-owned homes, a restaurant/urban inn run by people with disabilities and a furniture store) and a flow-through housing facility for residents of the residential community, among others.

All residents have their own bedroom of about 16 square meters in the community building. The living room, kitchen and showers are communal. Next to the residence is the recycling store run by community members and volunteers.

Interaction with the community:

Despite the fact that residents work in an Emmaus Foundation thrift store or perform other activities within the facility, there is still interaction with the community. Residents actively interact and integrate seamlessly into both the neighborhood and the city. The Emmaus Domstad Foundation operates three thrift stores. Domstad and Haarzuilens jointly staff the collection system, with Haarzuilens taking on the coordinating role.

Emmaus Domstad

Founded: 2006

Capacity: 16

Security level: Low

Nearest city/town:

Utrecht

Nature of interaction:

Visited and reported by

RJN (16/08/2023)

Publicity/ read more

- About Emmaus The Netherlands at the official website of Emmaus:

Emmaus Nederland. (September 22, 2023). *Emmaus Nederland*. Retrieved November 9th, 2023, from <https://emmaus.nl/>

- Document about Emmaus The Netherlands and how they work (in dutch):

¹Utrecht (Municipality, Utrecht, Netherlands) - Population statistics, charts, map and location. (2023). City Population. Retrieved November 9th, 2023, from https://www.citypopulation.de/en/netherlands/admin/utrecht/0344__utrecht/

Emmaus Nederland. (May 2023). *Kernbeschrijving Emmaus Werkwijze*. Retrieved November 9th, 2023, from <https://emmaus.nl/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Emmaus-Nederland-Werkwijze-Mei-2023.pdf>

- About Emmaus Domstad at the official website of Emmaus Domstad:

Emmaus Domstad. (2020, May 28). *Wonen - Emmaus Domstad*. Retrieved November 9th, 2023, from <https://emmausdomstad.nl/wonen/>