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Case Study: Networking Academies at Prisons

# Italy: Seconda Casa di Reclusione di Milano

## Preparing Inmates to Succeed in a Technology-Driven Job Market

After release from prison, many inmates face challenges reintegrating into society. A partnership between Cisco Networking Academy and a prison in Italy, the Seconda Casa di Reclusione di Milano, has helped 120 inmates develop valuable technology skills that can help them qualify for high-demand jobs and begin new lives upon their release.

### The Issue: Lack of Skills Hurts Job Seekers

The unemployment rate in Italy has been nearly 13%, and over 42% for people under age 25 (2015-16). According to the Ministry of Justice, 69% of inmates who are released from Italian prisons are eventually re-incarcerated. Programs that help inmates develop tangible skills can help them build confidence and launch sustainable careers upon their release.

### The Solution: ICT Skills Training

Seconda Casa di Reclusione di Milano began offering information and communications technology (ICT) training to inmates in 2002 through with Cisco Networking Academy courses. Up to 15 students per

course are accepted each year and competition is fierce. Lorenzo Lento has taught the courses for 10 years, and has seen students who had never touched a computer learn to build websites. "They are not all becoming systems engineers, but most have found a job in the IT world," he says.



### Impact

About 70% of the 120 program participants have been released, and of those, 80% have found work—and none of them have returned to prison. In addition to providing a career path for participants and reducing recidivism, the program is helping to fill the growing need for people with technology skills.

Italy ranked 40 out of 144 countries for technological readiness, according to the 2013 World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report.

One program participant, Antonello, was released in 2011 and created 2 companies: the first is Sitishop, a web agency, and the second is Cab Service group, a waste disposal company. "Networking Academy helped me a lot, not just providing the technical skills," he says. "But also the entrepreneurial skills I needed to create my own companies."

Luigi is still in prison, but has been authorized to leave every day to work at Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi in Milan as a network administrator. Upon his release, he will already have work experience and professional connections, key ingredients for starting a new life.

"I started 2 years ago with Cisco CCNA, and last year I passed the CCNA Security certification exam," Luigi said. "Cisco Networking Academy really changed my perspective on life."

**More Information**

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