



## Science and scientists from the children point of view, an overlook from drawings

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The Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia (INGV) is currently the largest European scientific institution dealing with Earth Sciences research and real-time surveillance, early warning, and forecast activities in geophysics and volcanology. The Laboratorio Didattica e Divulgazione Scientifica of INGV organizes every year educational and outreach activities with schools of different levels and with general public to convey scientific knowledge and to promote the Research on Earth Science, focusing on volcanic and seismic hazard.

Among the most successful initiatives is the creation of a calendar designed for the schools and realized based on a competition devoted to children of primary school. The intent is to provide a pleasant stimulus for discussion for teachers and students. Schools participate with enthusiasm by sending drawings made by children on a specified theme, different each year, chosen among geophysics and earth sciences arguments. For 2011, the theme was selected also with the aims to investigate on the image the young generations have of the Research and on its potential and future prospective. The title was "Scienziato anche io! La Scienza e gli scienziati visti dai bambini" (I'm a scientist too! Science and scientists from the children point of view), with the purpose of give a shape to the image children have of the world of science, its potential and the figure of the scientists.

We asked the children to realized a draw suggesting some possible arguments between:

1. How do you imagine a scientist? How do you imagine the daily activities of a researcher?
2. What is the invention you consider the most important among all those you know?
3. What would you invent?

The 986 drawings realized by 6 up to 10 years old boys and girls from 48 schools distributed throughout the Italian territory, report us a generally positive picture of the work of scientists and also highlight a great level of confidence in the potential of science, capable to respond to needs and problems of the humanity and of the environment in which we live.

Moreover, the drawings provide us a direct and unconventional approach to point out how we convey the scientific research (a strategic topic for a suitable future of the humanity) to the players of the world of tomorrow.