

*<< I would like an Italy with  
less discrimination, where  
everyone can be equal  
...and I would give more space  
to young people because we  
are the future! >>*

Boy, 11 years old.



## ANALYSIS and RESULTS

The voice of the children  
(age group: 10-13 )

## “L'Italia che viviamo, l'Italia che vogliamo” (The Italy we live in, the Italy we want)

### Questionnaire: 10 - 13 year olds

**234 children** answered the questionnaire made up of about **70 questions**: **51.3%** were girls and **48.7% were boys** (Tab. 1).

The questionnaire is divided into **seven sections**:

- I. About you
- II. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Adolescent
- III. You and your rights
- IV. The Italy I would like...
- V. If you were...
- VI. Your commitment
- VII. Your opinions about this questionnaire and guide

#### I – About you

Of the 234 questionnaires completed, **41.5%** of the children were **13 years old**; **36.3%** were **12 years old**; **8.5%** were **11 years old** and **3%** were **10 years old** (Tab. 2).

Since one of the Associations of the PIDIDA could rely on the help of a year 4 elementary teacher, it was held correct in the interests of maximum inclusion to consider the questionnaires completed by these **9 year old** children, (**6.4%** of the total). Some questionnaires completed by **14, 15 and 16 olds** have also been included (**3.4%** 14 year olds and **0,4%** for the other two ages); in some cases these were foreign students who were in a class below their age group due to language

problems, while in other cases it is presumed they were students who had to repeat the year.

**Table 1: Percentages of participants by gender**

GENDER	Percentages %
Girls	51.3
Boys	48.7
Total	100.0

**Table 2: Percentages of participants by age**

AGE	Percentages %
10	3.0
11	8.5
12	36.3
13	41.5
Other*	10.7
Total	100.0

Observing the percentages divided by class, it can be seen that **9.4%** are in **year 4 elementary school**, **7.3 %** in **year 1 first level secondary school**, **47%** in **year 2 level secondary school** and **36.3%** in **year 3 first level secondary school**.

\* Other includes all those who are 9, 14, 15 and 16 years old.

As far as concerns place of birth, on the other hand, **82.9%** were born in **Italy**, whereas **15.4%** were born **abroad**, of who **8** in Bangladesh and in Romania, **4** Ecuador and in Moldavia, **2** in Peru and in India and just one child in countries like Albania, Germany, Kosovo, Brazil, the Ivory Coast, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Peru, Finland, India and Pakistan (Tab. 3).

As far as regards territorial divisions, it can be seen that **62%** of the questionnaires were carried out in **Italy's northern regions** (Lombardy 35%, Trentino Alto Adige 3.4%, Liguria 6.8%, Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia 8.1%), **20.9%** in the **central regions** (6.4% in Le Marche, 5.6% in Lazio and 9% in Umbria) and the remaining **17.1%** in the **south** (11.1% in Campania and 6% in Puglia). In this research the regional distribution was dictated by the availability of the PIDIDA associations present in the areas to participate in the practical stage of the project. It must be remembered that this operation required a large amount of human resources, and that many of the smaller associations are composed mainly of volunteers.

Most of the questionnaires were completed in the **classroom** (91% of the total) and in **the bases of associations** (9%).

**Table 3: Percentages of participants by place of birth**

PLACE OF BIRTH	Percentages %
Italy	82.8
Foreign nation	15.4
Other*	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Other includes unanswered.

## II – The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The second part of the questionnaire invites the interviewee to answer questions about their knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

When asked “Have you ever heard of the CRC?” **81.2%** answered **yes**. In **60.1%** of cases, they had heard about it from **a teacher** (especially for children in the northwest, central regions, and the south), in **34.2%** of cases their source of information was **the TV** (especially for children in the northeast), followed by **parents** and the **instructors of an association** (**32.1%** and **31.6%**) (Tab. 4).

**Table 4: “Have you ever heard of the CRC?”**

	Percentages %
<b>Yes</b>	<b>81.2</b>
<b>No</b>	18.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## III – You and your rights

The following section deals with the rights sanctioned by the 1989 Convention.

### 1. The right to be protected from any discrimination and the right not to be excluded

Almost all the children (**95.7%**) believe they know the meaning of **exclusion**: **43.3%** of answers refer to exclusion linked to a **physical defect or a disability**; **however**, the main remaining answers link exclusion to **behavioural** reasons:

behaving badly towards others (42%), being a bully(34.4%), being quiet or shy (21.5%). Little more than 25% of cases spoke about exclusion linked to difficulties fitting in due to being of a different nationality. Taking into consideration the two variables gender and geographic location, it can be seen that amongst the answers from the boys, those linked to unpleasant behaviour are most frequent, if only by a small margin, both in general terms (“...when you behave badly”) and more specifically (“...when you behave like a bully”). Of the answers given by the girls on the other hand, particular attention to exclusion linked to physical or mental problems can be noted (Tab. 5 and 6).

**Table 5: “Do you know what exclusion means?”**

	Percentages %
Yes	95.7
No	4.3
Total	100.0

**Table 6: “What do you think causes children to be excluded?” - Percentages of interviewees divided by gender (multiple choice question)**

	Percentages %	
	BOYS	GIRLS
...when they behave like a bully	21.8	15.8
...when they behave badly	24.4	21.5
...when they have a physical or mental problem or defect	20.8	25.8
...when they are quiet or shy	11.2	12.4
...when they are poor	6.1	7.7
...when they are from another country	13.2	13.9
...when they are a different gender to me	0.5	1.4
Other*	2.0	1.5

Other includes unanswered, errors, and other answers.

When asked “Have you ever felt excluded?”, only 35% answered **yes**.

Of those who said that they sometimes feel excluded, some also said when and how:

- At school:

**“When it's break-time my classmates split into groups and I feel left out so I sit at my desk on my own”** - Girl, 12 years old.

- Because they moved to a new town (from another Italian town or from abroad):

**“When I came new to Italy all the friends in the Italian school made fun of me because I didn't speak Italian well and because they didn't want me there”**- Girl, 10 years old.

\* Other includes unanswered, errors and other replies. Since the question allows more than one reply, the percentages are calculated on the number of answers, not interviewees.

## 2. The best interests of children and adolescents

Concerning this theme the interviewees were asked to say whether they think that adults (parents, teachers, instructors, representatives of local and medical Institutions) give priority to matters concerning them in the decision making process: their view was that **parents (46.8%) doctors (33%) always prioritise the matters** that concern children and adolescents; and teachers **(39,7%), most of the time**. According to **27.2%** of the children, on the other hand, the representatives of institutions only **sometimes** take their needs into consideration. Even though this demonstrates a certain level of distrust towards institutional figures and organisations, it needs to be taken into account that answers to this question are probably influenced (at least partially) by the opinions of the adults in the children's families, above all for the smaller children of 10-11, who might not fully understand the role of the local authorities. As far as concerns the instructors of associations, **36.2%**, answered that they did not know if these figures give priority to the matters concerning children and adolescents in the decision making process.

## 3. The right to express your opinion

In answer to the question, "Do you think adults listen to children and adolescents?" most **(64.2%) answered positively**. This still leaves however, a good percentage **35.3%** who clearly feel that their opinions are not taken seriously enough (Tab. 7).

**Table 7: "Do you think adults listen to children and adolescents?"**

Yes	64.2
No	35.3
Other*	0.5
Total	100.0

When they were asked to state freely, **when in their opinion, adults listen to the opinions of children, they indicated situations that concerned the choice of school, holiday destinations, or more generically, personal problems**.

The points raised previously are corroborated by the question "Can you express your opinions at home?" **80%** answered that they can express their opinions **always or most of the time**. Almost **40%** of the answers given said they can express their opinions on any matter **(everything)**, 30% on the other hand feel constrained to themes relative to **school**, whereas **matters concerning their family** or the choice of the type of **holiday, were both indicated by 12% of cases**. There were no significant differences in the answers given by girls and boys (Tab. 8).

As far as concerns the question about the possibility of expressing their opinions **at school, 60%** replied that generally the views they express **are taken into**

\* Other includes unanswered and errors

consideration, though it must be noted that **38.5%** of the interviewees replied that they did not feel they were taken seriously.

**Table 8: “What subjects can you express your opinions about?”(multiple choice question)**

	Percentages %				
	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never	Other
The school curriculum	8.3	23.2	<b>39.0</b>	21.9	7.6
Lesson timetables	7.0	18.3	25.8	<b>39.3</b>	9.6
Amount of homework	14.3	11.7	<b>44.8</b>	26.2	3.0
Break-time organisation	9.6	12.7	24.9	<b>46.7</b>	6.1

Other includes unanswered, errors, and other answers.

On single points such as the school curriculum, lesson time tables, amount of homework, and break-time organisation, a large percentage indicated that their opinions are only *sometimes* taken into consideration as far as concerns **the school curriculum and the amount of homework** (**39%** and **44.8%** respectively) and *never* in matters concerning the management of school time such as **the timetable and break time** (**39.3%** and **46%**)(Tab. 9).

**Table 9: “Do your teachers ask you what you think about the following points?”**

	Percentages %
About everything	<b>39.3</b>
About school	30.7
About family problems	12.3
About holidays	12.5
Other	5.2

Other includes “don’t know” and errors

The following questions were about the **means by which they receive information and express their own ideas**. In both cases the answers were very similar: the children prefer the newer forms of communication such as the **internet and blogs**, they tend not to choose newspapers, magazines, or school papers, while as far as concerns radio and television programmes, **37.4%** declared to choose them for receiving information (as opposed to **8.2%** who would like to use them for spreading their ideas). Furthermore, a small part declared to prefer to receive information and spread their ideas through friends, and adults, but also by talking about them. A more detailed analysis, by gender and geographical position showed that: the boys, and the students from central Italy, mainly use **radio and television programmes** for receiving information, the girls and children in the northwest and the south choose the **internet**. This more recent form of communication is preferred by boys and students in the northwest and the central regions for spreading their ideas, while more specifically **blogs** are indicated as the means preferred by girls and those in the northeast. In general it can be seen that **15-16%** of the girls use newspapers (Tab. 10, 11, 12 ).

**Table 10: "Which means of communication do you prefer for receiving information?"- Percentages of interviewees divided by gender**

	Percentages %		
	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
Newspapers and magazines	11.7	15.5	13.7
Radio and television programmes	45.0	30.2	37.4
The internet	27.0	37.1	32.2
Other	16.2	17.3	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Other includes unanswered, errors, and other replies.

**Table 11: "Which means of communication do you prefer for spreading your ideas?"- Percentages of interviewees divided by gender**

	Northwest	Northeast	Central regions	South	Total
Newspapers and magazines	14.4	8.7	18.4	15.0	14.2
School papers	5.6	4.3	12.2	32.5	11.6
Radio and television programmes	11.1	6.5	8.2	5.0	8.4
The internet	25.6	15.2	26.5	27.5	24.0
Blogs	24.4	37.0	20.4	10.0	23.6
Other*	18.9	28.3	14.3	10.0	18.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Other includes unanswered and errors

**Table 12: "Which means of communication do you prefer for receiving information?"- Percentages of interviewees divided by geographic area**

	Percentages %		
	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
Newspapers and magazines	11.9	16.4	14.2
School papers	7.3	15.5	11.6
Radio and television programmes	13.8	3.4	8.4
The internet	28.4	19.8	24.0
Blogs	18.3	28.4	23.6
Other <sup>1</sup>	20.3	16.5	18.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

This situation is confirmed by the question "Does the mass media meet children's needs to be informed about topics of interest to them?": according to the children interviewed only the **internet always** satisfies these demands, whereas **newspapers, TV news and the radio only sometimes** do so.

**43.6%** of the children and adolescents interviewed go to **youth associations** (Tab. 13) and these are prevalently the Scouts, or sports clubs, or church youth clubs.

**Table 13: "Do you go to a youth association?"**

	Percentages %
No	55.5
Yes	43.6
Other*	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**29.1%**, also said that they **would like to create one**; a recurring reason for creating an association was that of protecting the rights of children and women, or more generally to protect people in difficult situations. A certain need to create opportunities to meet and compare ideas can be noted, since clubs and associations are indicated as places where it is possible to express and share their opinions and ideas, where they can meet new people, hang out with friends, and help people in difficult situations.

#### 4. The right to be protected

According to **50.4%** of the children interviewed, **children can be considered victims of ill-treatment when they are hit**; **15%** think ill-treatment is **when children are forced to do something they don't want to**, the remaining **6.4%** think ill-treatment means **when children are not listened to** and **2.6%** **when they are not allowed to play**.

If they were the victim of ill-treatment by someone, most of the children interviewed would go to their **parents (68.4%)**, their **friends (10.7%)** or to the **police**

\* Other includes unanswered



(8.5%), while only 2.1% would seek help from their **teachers** and 3% from **other relatives** (Tab. 14).

**Table 14: "When do you think a child or adolescent can be considered to be ill-treated?"**

	Percentages %
<b>When they are hit</b>	<b>50.4</b>
<b>When they are forced to do something they don't want to</b>	15.0
<b>When they are neglected</b>	15.0
<b>When their opinions are not listened to</b>	6.4
<b>When they are not allowed to play</b>	2.6
<b>When they are told off</b>	1.7
<b>Other</b>	8.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Other includes unanswered

## 5. The right to health and health care

The questions concerning health and health care were answered as follows: **47.4%** said that they **always eat healthily**, **87.6%** said they **never smoke**, almost **40% most of the time do things outside** (though the girls and the students from the central regions admitted to only doing things outside sometimes) and **only sometimes go to parks (50.4%)**.

As far as concerns the means of transport for going to school, girls and boys show different preferences: the girls mostly choose **car travel**, whereas the **boys** also mention other means, such as **on foot**. There are also substantial differences between geographic areas: the children in the central regions prefer car travel, while those in the northeast and the south prefer public transport like **buses (22.2%)**, and those in the northwest (as with the boys) prefer going to school on foot or by bicycle (expressed in "Other")(Tab. 15). It is however important to keep in mind that in this case there are many variables that influence the choice reported by the children interviewed: above all, the age of these children means that many of them (especially the smaller children) are taken to school by their parents, and therefore the means of transport is chosen by the adults. Other important factors to be taken into account are the distance from the children's home to their school, and whether they are living in a town or a small village.

However, the answers give an idea of the trends concerning the means of transport used by the children interviewed.

**Table 15: "How do you go to school?" – Percentages of interviewees divided by geographic area**

	Northwest	Northeast	Central regions	South	Total
<b>By train</b>	-	4.3	-	-	0.4
<b>By underground train</b>	1.0	-	-	2.5	0.4
<b>By bus</b>	15.2	50.0	26.5	52.5	22.2
<b>By car</b>	38.4	28.3	40.8	45.0	39.3
<b>Other</b>	45.4	21.8	30.6	-	37.6
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Other includes errors and other replies.

As far as concerns participation in health education programmes, most of the interviewees said that have had the opportunity to attend them (66.7%). The **topics covered** in the lessons in 50% of cases were about, **food and nutrition** and in 43.3% of cases **healthy eating and physical activity**. A very small part answered that they has talked about **doping and smoking** (Tab. 16).

**Table 16: "What did you talk about on the health education courses?" (multiple choice)**

	Percentages %
<b>Food and nutrition</b>	50.0
<b>Healthy eating and physical activity</b>	43.3
<b>Other</b>	6.7

Other includes other answers.

Another topic covered was that of the **environment**. The children were asked, through an open question, what "respect for the environment" means to them, their answers show that to them it mainly means **to not damage or pollute the environment, to separate rubbish for recycling, to not cut down trees, to not dump toxic waste, to use clean energy and to look after the environment**.

**Example reply:**

**"It means not polluting, and to divide rubbish for recycling and encouraging other people to do so"** - Boy, 13 years old.

They too contribute to keeping it clean by **throwing paper, plastic, and glass away separately** (a reply given above all by girls) in 26% of cases, **they turn off taps when they are not needed so as not to waste water** (24% of cases). Furthermore, in 23.2% of cases, they turn off lights **in order not to waste electricity** and in 21% of cases **they throw paper away in the designated bins**. Their replies also included: *I suggest using solar panels to my parents, I turn my computer off after using it, and also I travel on foot or by bicycle* (Tab. 17).

Table 17: “What do you do to respect the environment?” (multiple choice question)

	Percentages %
I throw paper, plastic, and glass away separately	26.0
I turn off taps when they are not needed so as not to waste water	24.0
I turn off lights that are not needed so as not to waste electricity	23.2
I throw paper in the designated bin	21.0
I tell my parents to use the car less and to travel by bus	3.1
Other	2.7

Other includes other answers

The questionnaire also asked the children to evaluate adults' attitudes towards respecting the environment, in their opinion **their parents, always or most of the time, do things to respect the environment** (the sum of these percentages reaches **84.9%**), **the local authorities** do things **most of the time** (**35%**) or sometimes (**29.9%**) and **politicians** *sometimes* (the children in the south however feel that this last category never do anything to respect the environment), while as far as regards neighbours, most (except for those in the northeast who answered most of the time) answered **they don't know if their neighbours do anything to respect the environment** (**33.8%**).

## 5. The right to an education

For the children interviewed, school is above all a **place where** they have the opportunity to **learn important things for their futures** (**78.2%**), a **place where they**

**can meet and mix with friends** (**8.1%**) and for just **3%** a **place where many of the things taught have nothing to do with what interests them** (Tab. 18).

Table 18: “Above all school is a place where...”

	Percentages %
...you learn important things for your future	<b>78.2</b>
...you meet and mix with your classmates	8.1
...many of the things taught have nothing to do with what interests you	3.0
...you cannot fully express what you think...	0.9
Other*	10.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Most (**88%**) would change aspects of their school and in particular, in **52.5%** of cases, the **organisation of lesson timetables** (a popular answer above all for boys and those in the northern and central regions), followed by **51.9%** of cases who replied **structure** (the classroom, toilets, gymnasium...) mainly indicated by girls and those in the south, while in almost **20%** of cases they **would change their rapport with the teachers** and in **13.6%** of cases the **teaching methods**. Some however would even like to change **the length of break-time** (**3%**) and even **the teachers** (**1.3%**)(Tab. 19).

\* Other includes unanswered, errors, and other answers. The children were asked to integrate the reply “You cannot fully express what you think...”

**Table 19: "Would you change anything about your school?"**

	Percentages %
Yes	88.0
No	12.0
Total	100.0

60.5% of the children would like to look at topics that are not amongst school subjects (though this appears not to be the case for those in the central regions): 46.5% of cases said current affairs, 41.5% said children's and adolescents' problem, and 26.8% said their rights. In this case too, a small part indicated other topics: sport (1.7%), economics (1.3%), but also bullying and sciences (0.9%). Analysing the data by gender showed that the boys prefer to look at current affairs topics, and the girls prefer to look at the problems that concern them more closely. Differences in topics of interest can also be noted depending on zone: children in the northwest and the south would prefer to look at current affairs, those in the central regions children's rights, and those in the northeast the problems that concern them more closely (Tab. 20 and 21).

**Table 20: "Which topics would you like to look at?"- Percentages of interviewees divided by gender**

	Percentages %	
	BOYS	GIRLS
Current affairs	41.8	28.4
The rights of children and adolescents	20.9	18.9
The problems faced by children and adolescents	23.1	37.9
Other*	14.3	14.7

**Table 21: "Which topics would you like to look at?"- Percentages of interviewees divided by geographic area**

	Northwest	Northeast	Central regions	South
Current affairs	31.6	34.8	30.0	48.4
The rights of children and adolescents	17.7	17.4	36.7	12.9
The problems faced by children and adolescents	26.6	43.5	20.0	32.3
Other*	24.1	4.3	13.3	6.5

\* Other includes unanswered and other replies. Since the question allows more than one reply, the percentages are calculated on the number of answers, not interviewees.

\* Other includes unanswered and other replies. Since the question allows more than one reply, the percentages are calculated on the number of answers, not interviewees.

When asked “Do you know children who don't go to school?” **35.9%** answered **yes**. Amongst the various **motives** causing these children to avoid going to school, the main one is **lack of interest in studying (20.9%)**, but there were also answers (mainly from those in the south) indicating the reason was that they are forced **to work for economic reasons (10.7%)**. The answers given also included family problems and poverty issues (Tab. 22 and 23).

**Table 22: “Do you know any children who don't go to school?”**

	Percentages %
Yes	<b>63.7</b>
No	35.9
Other*	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 23: “Do you know why they don't go to school?”**

	Percentages %
They don't want to study	20.9
For economic reasons (they work)	10.7
Other*	<b>68.4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Other includes unanswered

\* Other includes unanswered and other replies

## 7. The right to leisure, free-time, and play

The last part of this section deals with the topic of the right to relax and have free-time. When asked “When do you have time to relax?” **41.9%** answered **every day, 36.3% more than once a week** and **7.7 %**, answered **once a week** (other answers included: after studying, 2 days a week, and not often). Again there are geographic differences: it appears that children in the northwest have more opportunity to relax every day, while those in the northeast and central regions, more than once a week, and those in the south on the other hand, not often or not many days a week (indicated in other answers)(Tab. 24).

**68.8%** however think they have a **sufficient amount of time** (Tab. 25) which they use above all for **listening to music (62.6%** of cases, favourite pastime of children in the northeast), **surfing the internet (59.7%)**, **sport (55%)**(most favoured by the children in the central regions), **playing video games (48.7%)**(a favourite with boys) and **reading (35.3%)**. A small part also answered that they **preferred to go out with friends, or attend music, sport or foreign language courses**.

**Table 24: “When do you have time to relax, play, and have fun?” – Percentages of interviewees divided by geographic area**

	Northwest	Northeast	Central regions	South	Total
Once a week	5.2	2.2	8.2	20.0	7.8
More than once a week	36.1	43.5	44.9	20.0	36.6
Every day	49.5	41.3	40.8	27.5	42.2
Other*	9.2	13.0	6.1	32.5	13.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 25: “Do you think this time is sufficient?”**

	Percentages %
Yes	68.8
No	26.5
Other*	4.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The last question was about the **spaces built especially for children** (parks, cycle paths, roller skating areas etc...). From the answers given it can be noted that this type of problem is more prevalent in the south (Tab. 26), because all the others said

\* Other includes unanswered, errors, and other replies.

that they had access to areas built specially for their pastimes. When they were asked what these areas were, they mainly mentioned **parks (14.5%)**, **youth centres (6.8%)** and **cycle paths (4.7%)**.

**Table 26: “Do you think that where you live there are enough places for young people to meet?”- Percentages of interviewees divided by geographic area**

	Northwest	Northeast	Central regions	South	Total
Yes	52.0	71.1	65.3	42.5	56.9
No	48.0	28.9	34.7	57.5	43.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>