Introduction
This paper presents the results of the international project The Relevance of Science Education (ROSE) on a national scale in Brazil. The project seeks to find young people’s interest in science, technology, environmental problems, science classes and biological evolution. About 40 countries participated in ROSE. The ROSE material may illuminate a range of important discussions in the science education community, for example issues such as curricular content versus student’s interests, students’ disenchantment with their science classes and others (SJØBERG and SCHREINER, 2005; SCHREINER and SJØBERG, 2004). The national data was obtained from 84 schools and 2,365 students from all Brazilian states. Some data of this study are presented here.

Methodology
The survey took advantage of statistical sampling following PISA-OECD database in Brazil. A sub-sample was designed, selecting randomly a reduced number of schools, which kept a nationwide significance. The ROSE questionnaire consists of statements in which students are asked to report what their interests are, using a four-point Likert scale. Responses range from strongly disagree to strongly agree, with no neutral option. The questionnaire was printed with optical laser personalisation of the answering fields, allowing digital capture of the answers. This allows low level (if any) of misleading data (633,820 items answered).

Results
Received questionnaires were 2,365 from 84 schools located in all Brazilian states, and among the respondents, 56.6% were girls and 41.5% were boys. Participants were from 1st year classes of high school, with expected ages of 14-15 years. Young people aged between 13 and 25 years old took part in the survey and the average age was 15.39 years (1.10 SD). Some results of this research can be observed in graphs below.

The science themes which most interest young Brazilians were those related to health: how to perform first-aid, cancer (what we know and how we can treat it), how to keep your body in good physical condition, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS.

1 The ROSE website is <http://www.roseproject.no/>.
Among girls, health issues prevailed as the most interesting subject, followed by the meaning of dreams. Brazilian boys were interested in sex and reproduction, how computers work and first-aid procedures.

In relation to the matters of interest, health related issues, fitness and beauty, followed by issues related to environmental protection are the ones that interested most the young Brazilians. Chemistry is the least mentioned subject by Brazilians, both girls and boys. Boys also have great interest in technology and physics, and girls by themes of mystery and unexplained phenomena.

In relation to future employment, in line with young people from other countries, Brazilians attach great value to issues related to personal satisfaction and pleasure, rather than to manual labour. Working with something meaningful and important and developing their skills are considered by Brazilians very relevant when choosing future employment.

Young Brazilians have an optimistic view about the future, with regard to environmental issues and are motivated to act in a positive way. They also have a feeling that they can influence the environmental issues and that society in general way should be more concerned about them. Girls are more optimistic about the future than boys, and believe that solutions can be found to environmental problems. Regarding the motivation for action, girls are also more willing to sacrifice consumption goods than boys (Graph 2).

International studies indicate in relation to school science that, although male and female students have different perceptions about scientific issues, in general they display a similar lack of interest in the discipline of science. Brazilians do not fit this profile: both boys and girls consider the discipline of science interesting (Graph 3).

Given the statement “I would like to be a scientist”, young people in developed countries are less interested in the career than those in developing ones. Young Brazilians lined up more with young people in developed countries, being close to young Greeks and Portuguese. Regarding the statement “I would like to have a job that deals with advanced technology”, Brazilians approach young people in developing countries, since they showed more interest than the young people in developed countries (Graphs 4 and 5).
Graph 4: Opinions about the questions “You would like to become a scientist?”

Graph 5: Opinions about the question “You would like to get a job in technology?”
Concerns about the Environment

Graph 2: Girls and boys’ concerns about the environment

Graph 3: Opinions about the question “Is school science interesting?”
The majority of students rejected the idea that their religion prevents them from believing in biological evolution; however, their religious beliefs prevent them from pursuing a career related to science (Graphs 6 and 7).

**Conclusions**

The science themes that mostly interest young Brazilians are those related to health. Regarding future employment, young Brazilians, in line with young people from other countries, attach greater value to issues related to personal satisfaction and pleasure, rather than to manual labour. Young Brazilians have an optimistic view about the future with regard to environmental issues and are motivated to act in a positive way. International studies indicate in relation to school science that, although male and female students have different perceptions about scientific issues, in general they show low interest in school science. Brazilians do not fit in this profile, as both boys and girls consider school science interesting, although they do not consider it easy.

**Graph 6: Opinions about biological evolution (boys and girls)**

**Graph 7: Opinions about biological evolution (religious students and general)**
Given the statement “I would like to be a scientist” young people in developed countries are less interested in the career than those of developing countries. Young Brazilians lined up mostly with the young people in developed countries, being closer to young Greeks and Portuguese. On the other hand, as regards the statement “I would like to have a job that deals with advanced technology”, Brazilians are close to young people in developing countries. Regarding biological evolution, the majority of students reject the idea that their religion prevents them from believing in biological evolution and their religious beliefs do not play a major role for the choice of a future career related to science.

Bibliography
