

**Investigating practitioners' perspectives on project success factors How performing a Q-study could help professionals**

**Qualitative Study on Dutch Infrastructure Construction Projects**

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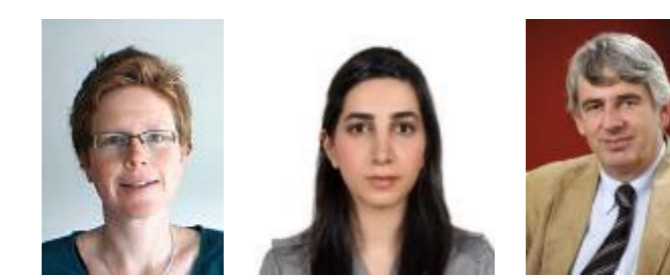
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# Investigating practitioners' perspectives on project success factors

## How performing a Q-study could help professionals

### Introduction

- Lot has been written about success criteria & factors
- Still disappointing project performance
- Learning is hampered by time pressure
- Companies feel the need for professionalizing
- In terms of management: one size doesn't fit all!

### Research questions

- *What are the perspectives of project professionals on project success factors?*
- *How could a Q-workshop contribute to knowledge creation?*

### Q-Methodology & data

- Practice-based approach to identify patterns of shared subjective viewpoints across individuals
  - Q-statements: elements to sort, main question
  - P-set: respondents
- Q-sorting: respondents rank the statements from
  - -3 (least important)
  - via 0 (neutral)
  - to +3 (most important)
- As part of Masterclasses on improving project management
- Two sessions (P-sets)
  - Contractor organisation in process energy sector (43 respondents)
  - Owner organisation in real estate (31 respondents)
- Positive vibes after the sorting sessions
- Factor analysis to identify perspectives
  - The number of factors has to be chosen by the researcher
  - For both datasets the 4 factor solutions were selected
  - Factors to perspectives by qualitative analysis

### Success factor framework

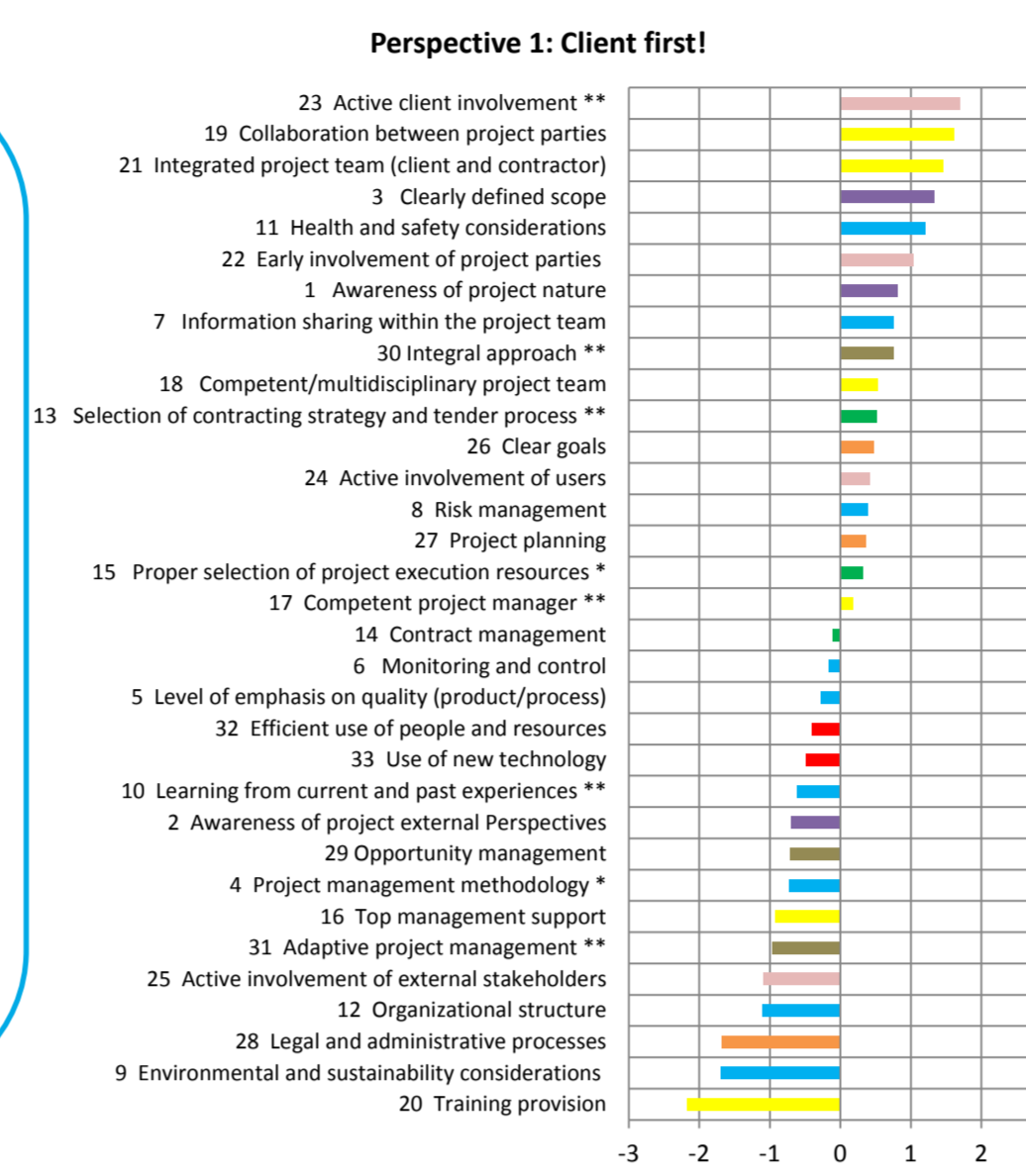
Project characteristics	1. Awareness of project nature 2. Awareness of project external Perspectives 3. Clearly defined scope
Project management process	4. Project management methodology 5. Level of emphasis on quality (product/process) 6. Monitoring and control 7. Information sharing within the project team 8. Risk management 9. Environmental and sustainability considerations 10. Learning from current and past experiences 11. Health and safety considerations 12. Organizational structure
Contracting	13. Selection of contracting strategy and tender process 14. Contract management
Leadership and team	15. Proper selection of project execution resources 16. Top management support 17. Competent project manager 18. Competent/multidisciplinary project team 19. Collaboration between project parties 20. Training provision 21. Integrated project team (client and contractor)
Stakeholder engagement	22. Early involvement of project parties 23. Active client involvement 24. Active involvement of users 25. Active involvement of external stakeholders
Policy and strategy	26. Clear goals 27. Project planning 28. Legal and administrative processes
Modern project management	29. Opportunity management 30. Integral approach 31. Adaptive project management
Resources	32. Efficient use of people and resources 33. Use of new technology

### Observations

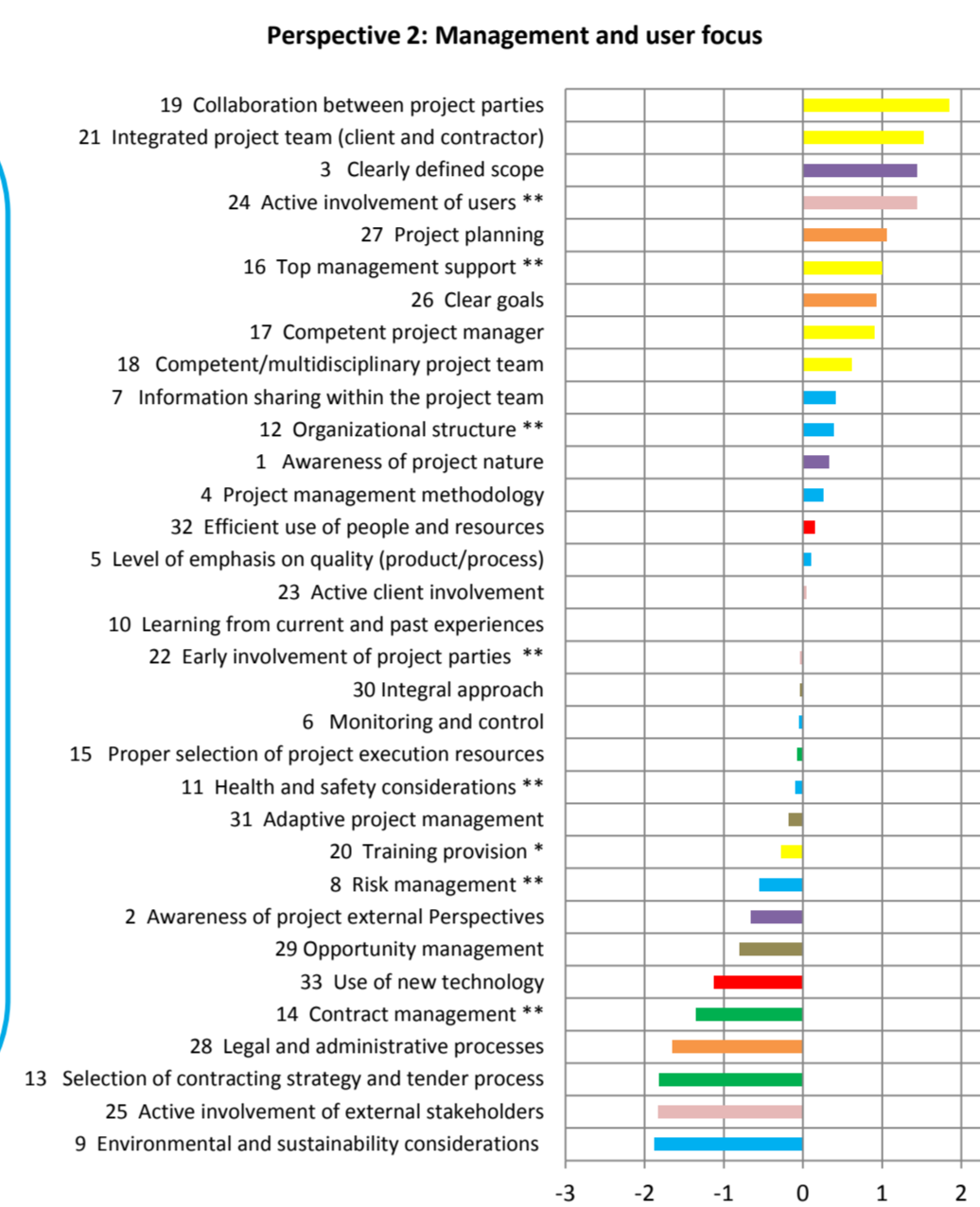
- Contractor point at the client and goes for integrated project team
- Client (owner) points at users and at general collaboration
- Agreement amongst the importance of the team & collaboration
- Training not considered part of projects
- Sustainability not explicitly valued

### Results - contractor

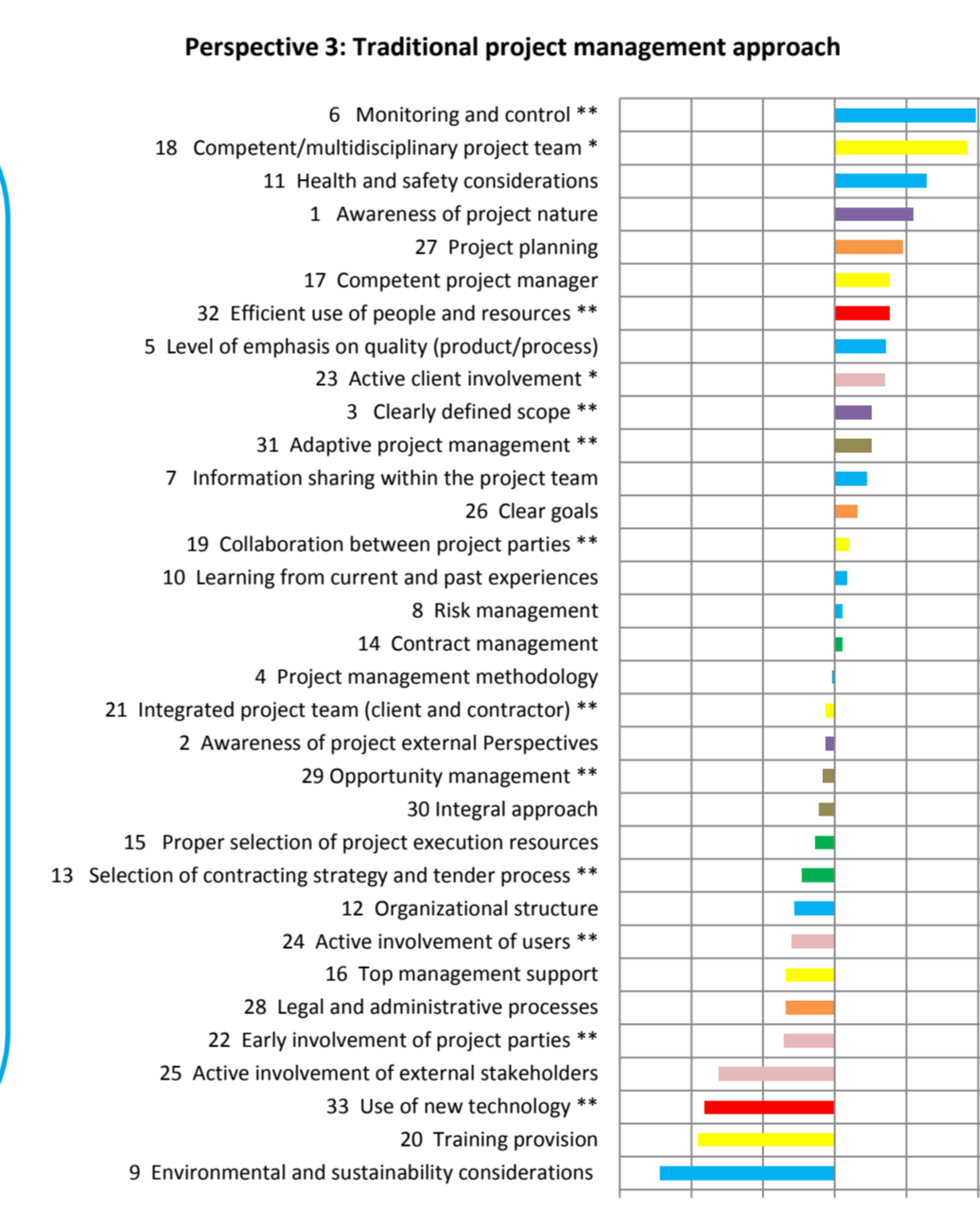
13 respondents  
Actively involved client  
Integral project approach  
Not adaptive



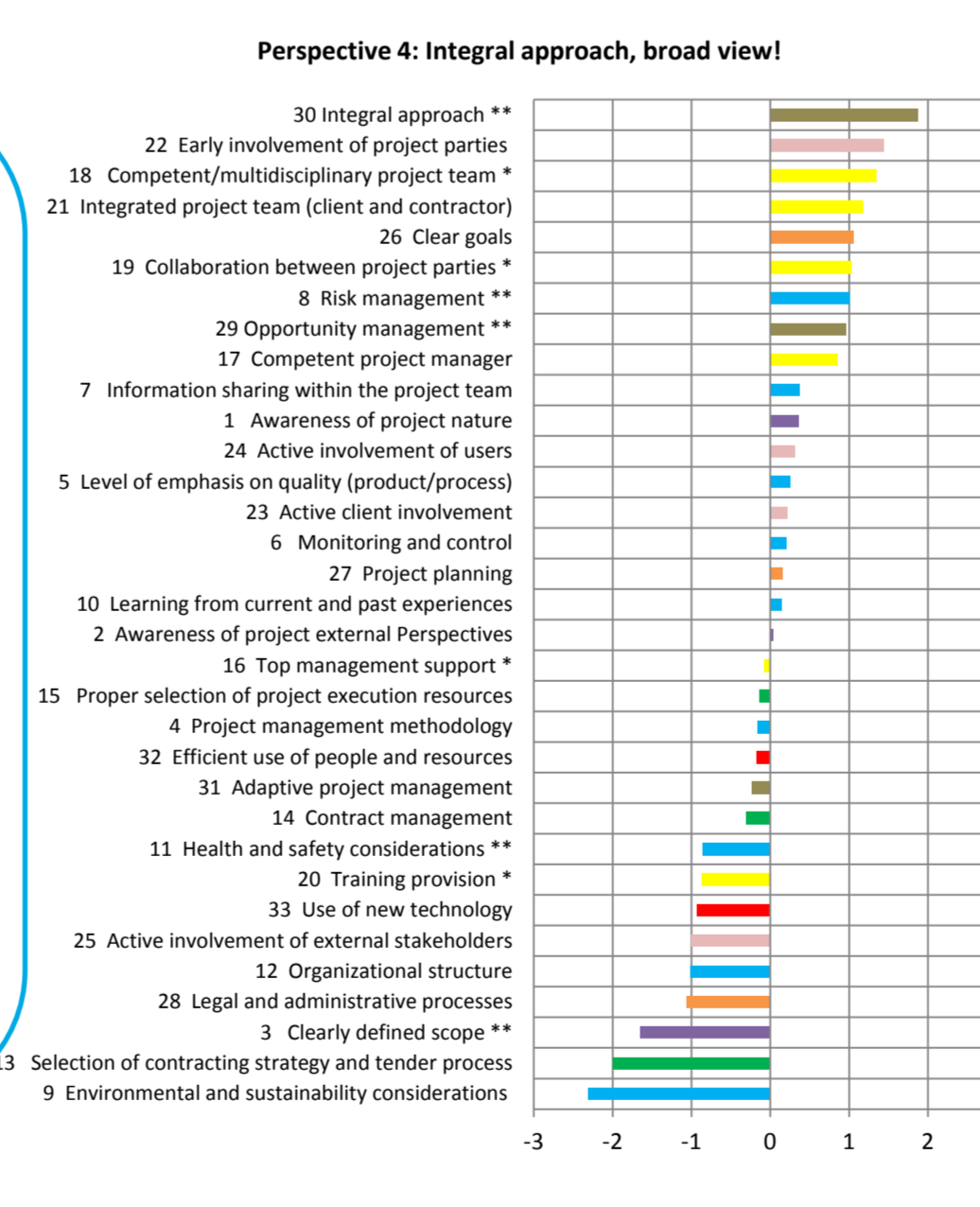
12 respondents  
Active involvement users  
Top management support  
No contract management



11 respondents  
Monitoring and control  
Competent & available team  
Well defined scope  
No use of new technology

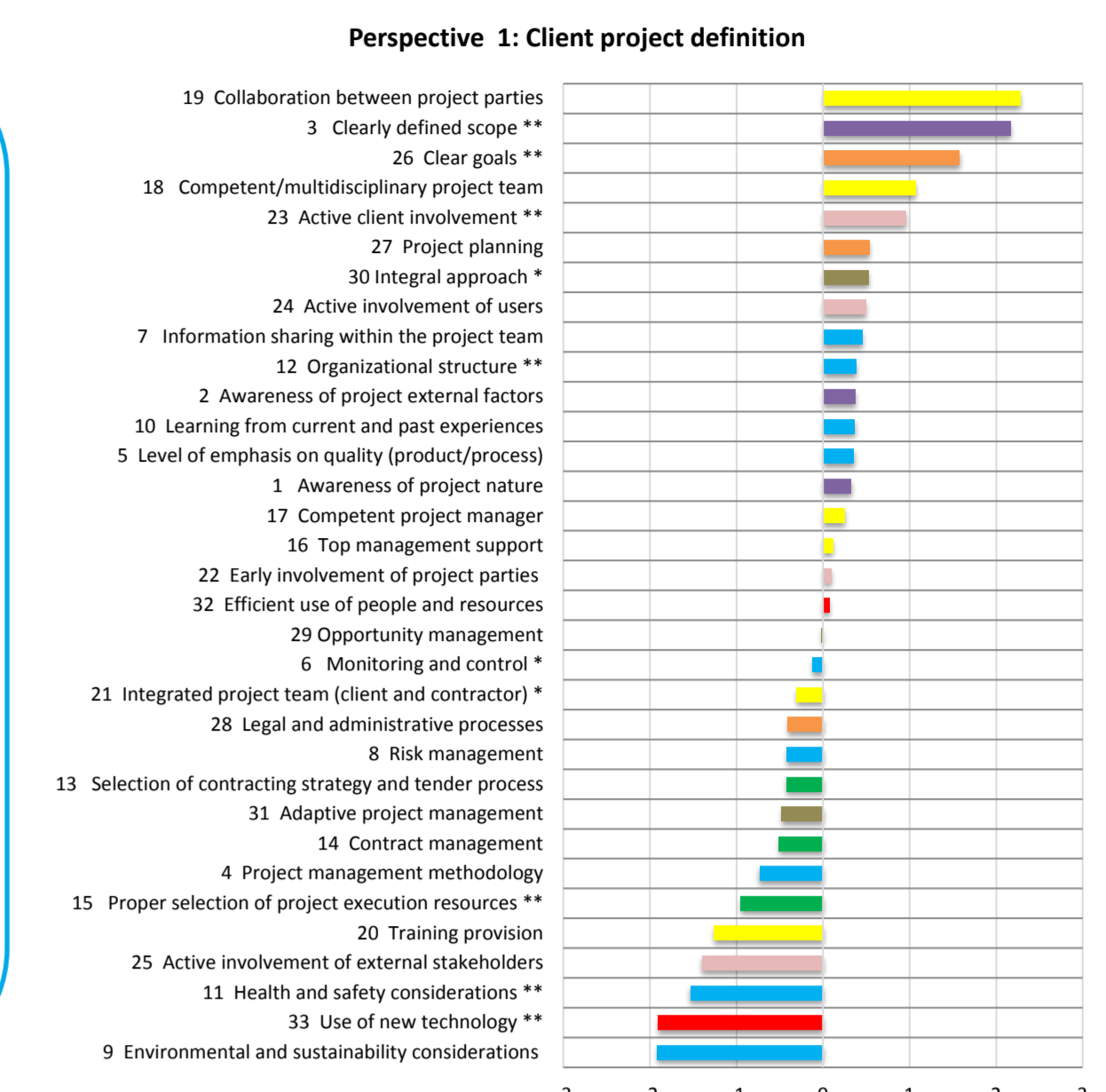


7 respondents  
Integral approach  
Risk management  
Opportunities  
No clearly defined scope

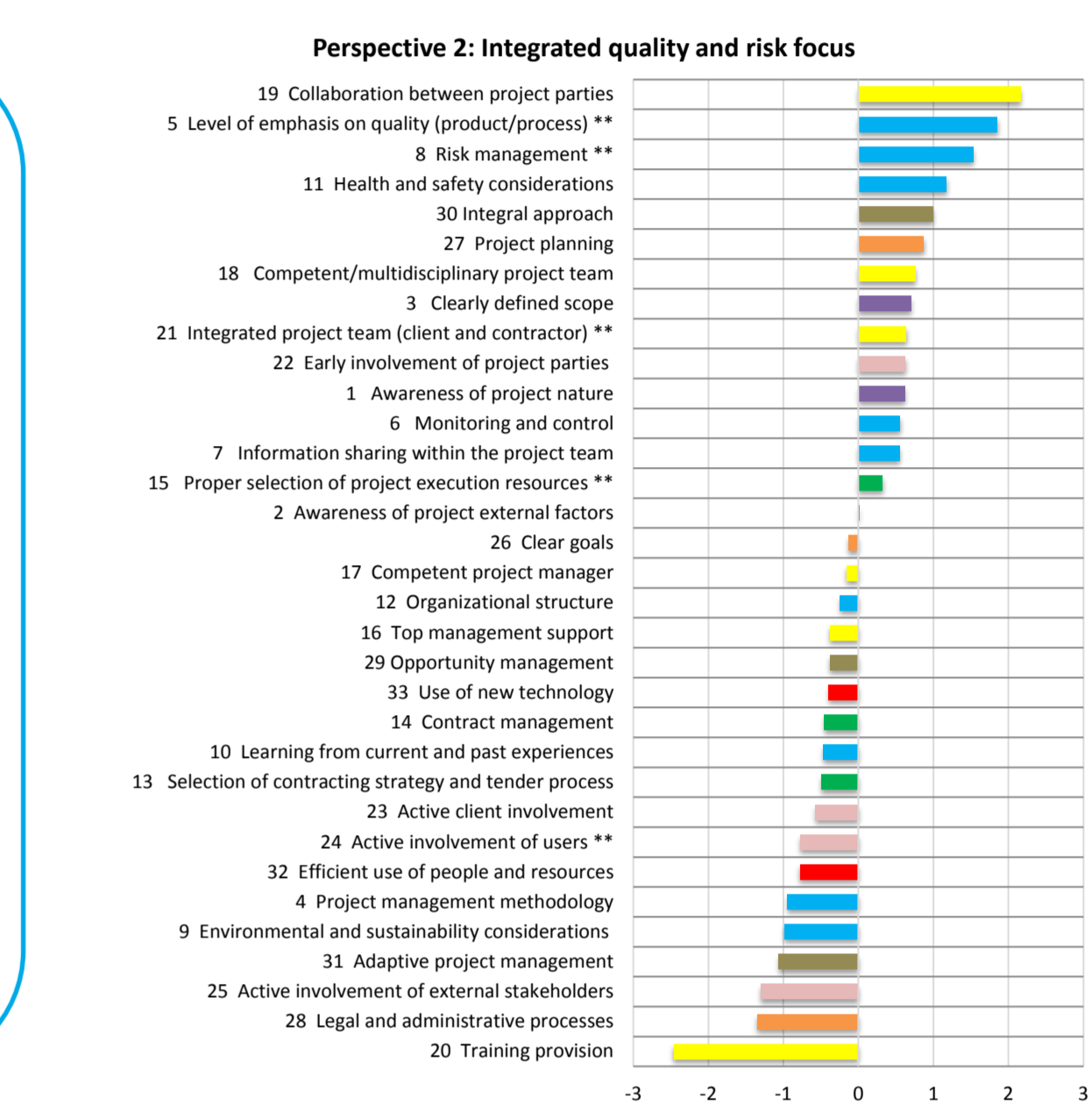


### Results - client

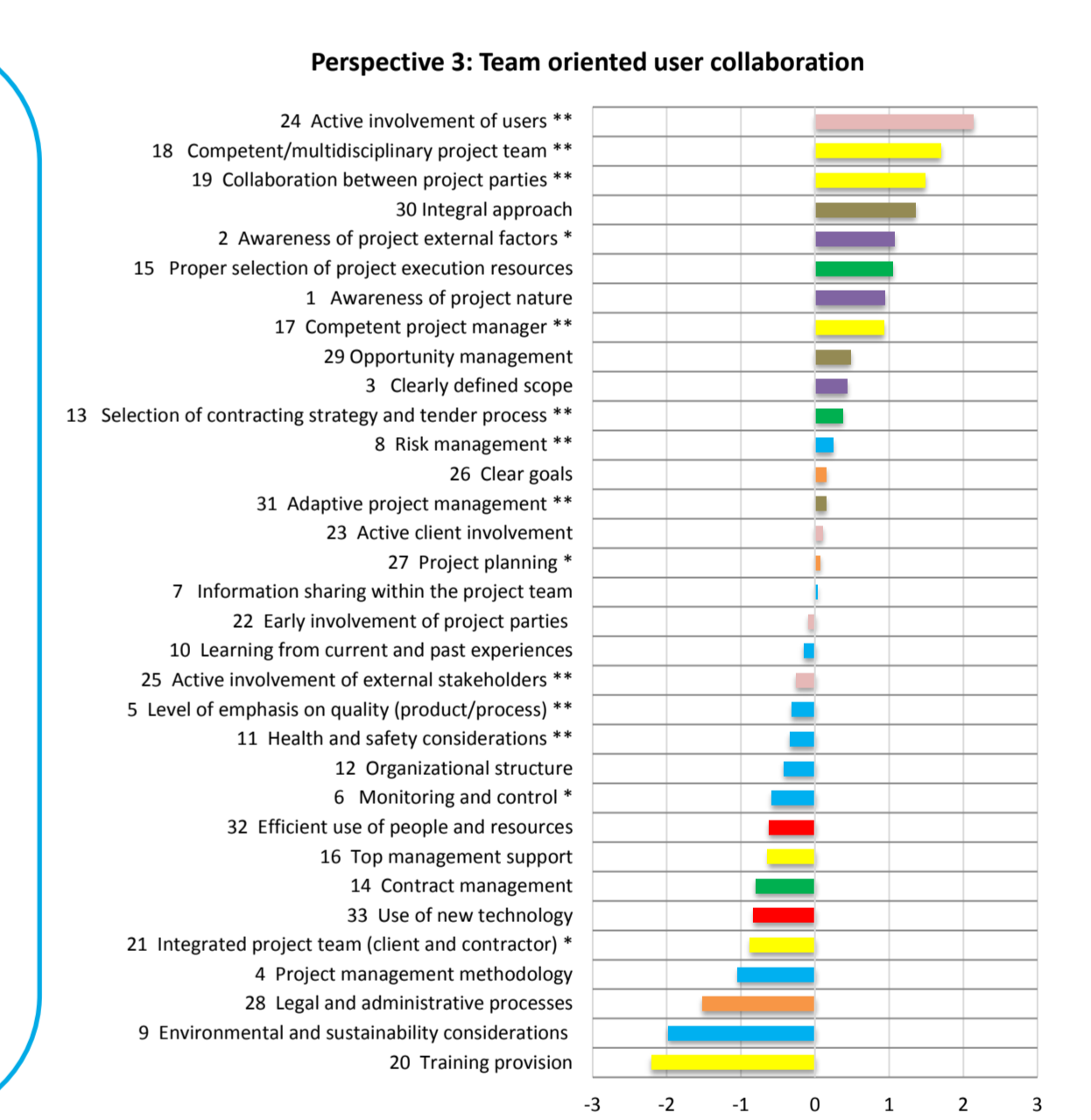
10 respondents  
Clear goals  
Clearly defined scope  
Active client involvement  
No use of new technology



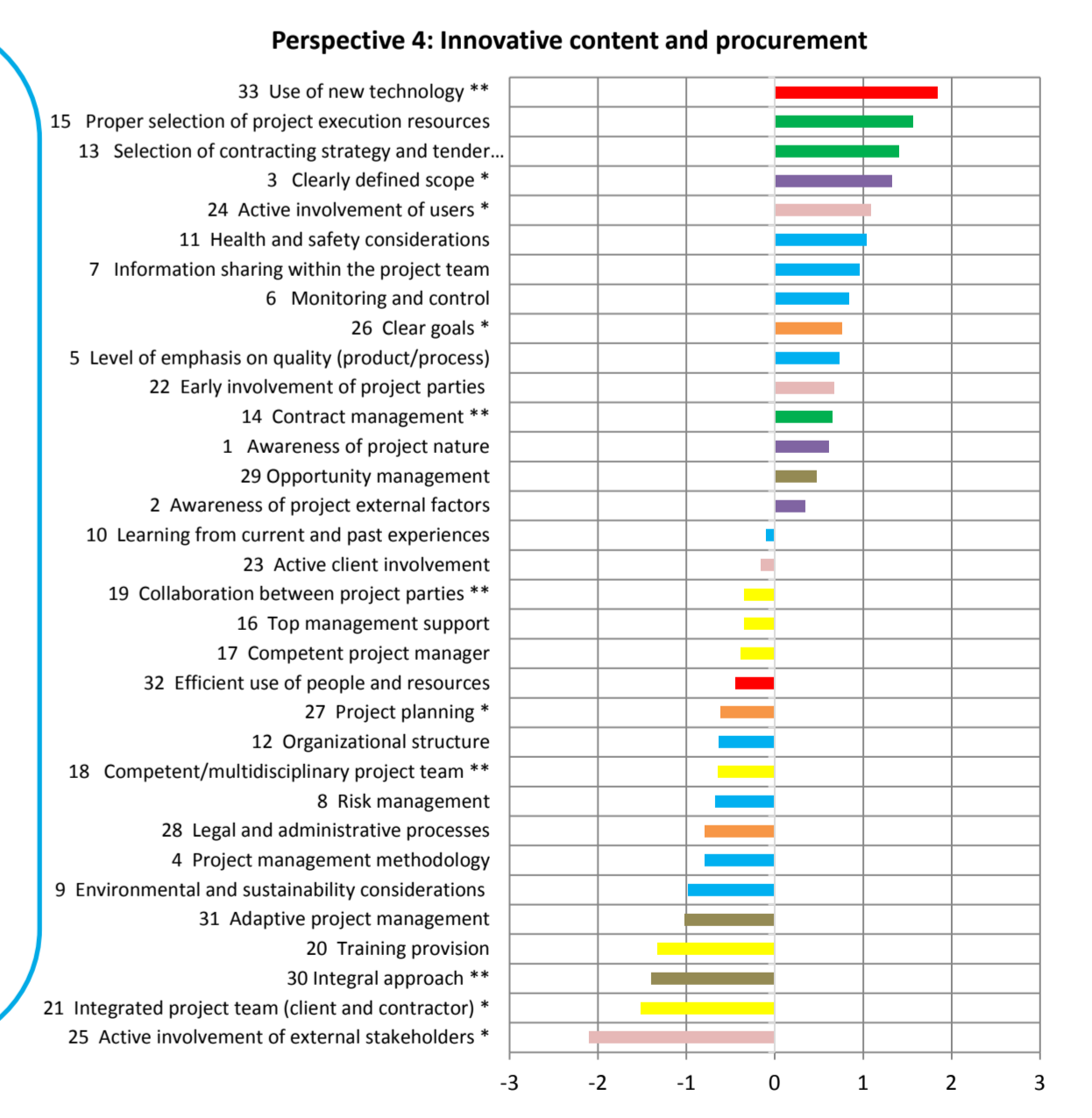
9 respondents  
Quality focus  
Risk management  
Integrated project team  
No user involvement



8 respondents  
Active involvement users  
Competent project team  
Collaboration between project parties, but no integrated project team



4 respondents  
Use of new technology  
Selection of contracting strategy and tender process  
Clearly defined scope  
No integrated team, nor integral approach



### Conclusion and way forward

- By participating in the Q-study awareness was created for the existence of different perspectives
- Participants experienced a positive contribution to their shared knowledge base
- Q-study as a interactive start-up activity in major projects?
- At different project stages? With different parties involved?
- Next step(s):
  - Towards fit-for-purpose: quantitative research into matching contexts, success criteria & success factors
  - Cross sectoral comparison