

## Not so fast!

CFO Survey Portugal  
Autumn 2018

**70% of CFOs in Portugal feel that the country's economic outlook is positive**

### Optimism is cooling down

Breaking away from the overwhelming optimism registered in the last two semesters, CFOs sentiment regarding the economic and financial prospects has dropped to lower but still optimistic levels. The sentiment towards the Portuguese economy as dropped from 90% to a still solid 70% respondents expecting a positive outlook. CFOs also became less optimistic about the financial performance prospects of their companies, since 41% describe themselves as more optimistic compared to 53% in the last survey.

**56% of respondents feel that there is a high level of financial and economic uncertainty**

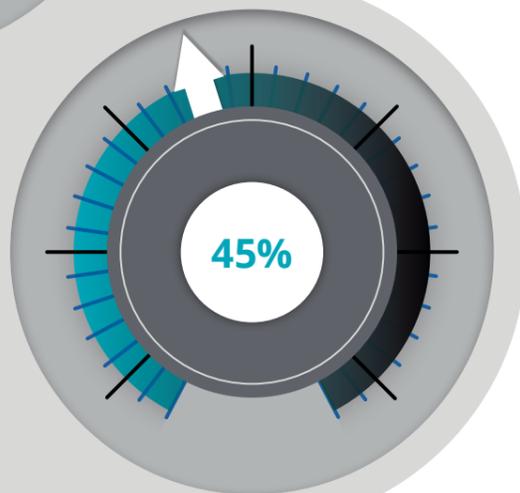
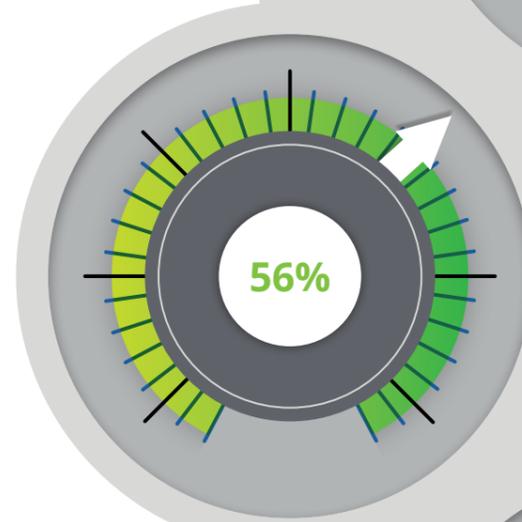
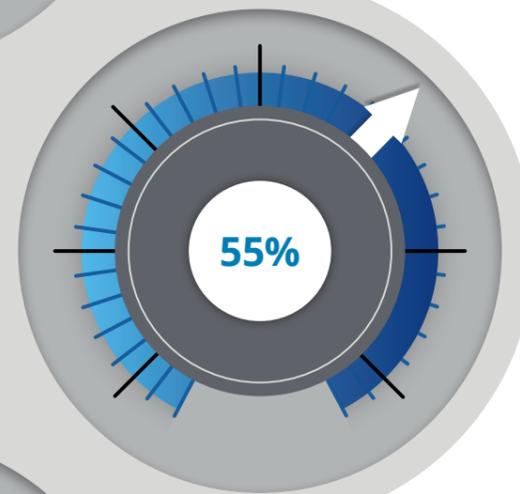
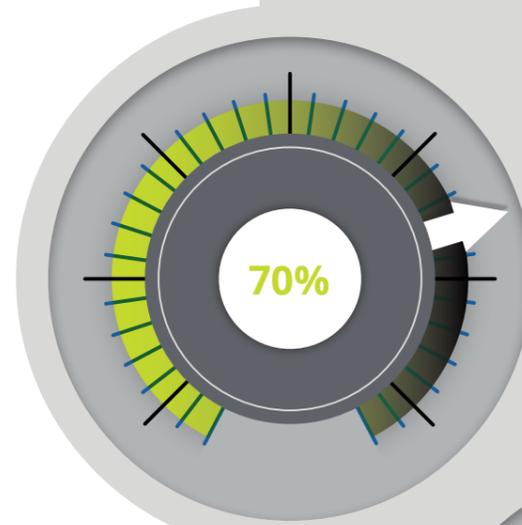
### Tread lightly

CFOs in Portugal tend to be in the unfavourable spectrum of uncertainty perception and this semester's results are no exception. Once more, 56% of respondents rate uncertainty as high against a mere 2% who feel it is low. Not surprisingly, risk aversion is again very distinguishable as 73% of CFOs consider this is not a good time to add risk to balance sheets. Regarding risks for their business, domestic public policies remains at the top (62% say it is likely to pose a risk for their business), although having dropped in likelihood since the Spring (67% last semester). Rising labour costs and rising input cost make up the other two risks in the top 3.

**+45% Net balance between CFOs who feel CAPEX will increase vs CFOs who feel it will decrease**

### Investment on the rise

Somewhat contrary to the diminishing appetite for risk demonstrated by surveyed CFOs, expectations for an increase in Capital Expenditure had a significant leap from last Spring, from 49% to 60%, signalling some shift towards growth after a prolonged period mainly oriented towards defensive strategies.



**55% of respondents feel that appropriate technical knowledge are the most difficult skills to find**

### Talent crunch

This semester's special questions focus on talent issues in CFOs' organizations. Most CFOs (55%) selected technical knowledge as the most difficult skill to acquire. Soft skills (communication, people, time management) are second with 48% of CFOs agreeing they are hard to find. Completing the top 3 is problem solving and adaptability. This survey also found that companies are solving skill shortages mostly with automation, staff retraining and temporary labour, followed by outsourcing and initiatives regarding a more attractive work environment and remuneration packages.

### Evolution of CFOs Expectations

