

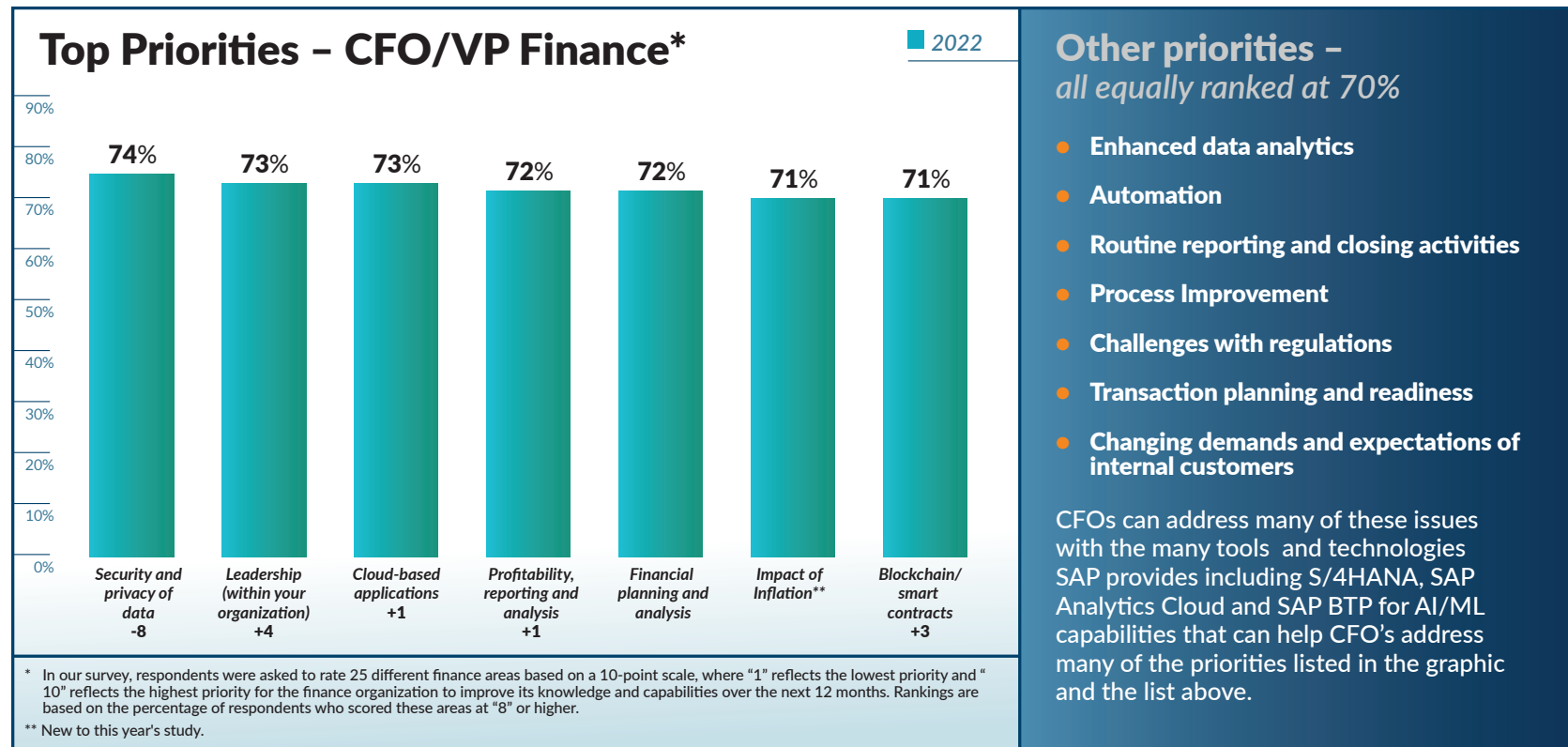
# Global CFO Survey Results Reveal a Shifting Focus for SAP Customers

*Finance's most pressing priorities include FP&A, security, cloud applications driven by organizations leadership*

Findings from Protiviti's latest **Global Finance Trends Survey** reveal that SAP customers are adjusting their finance priorities at the behest of their CFOs. The focus is shifting from pandemic trends, such as accelerated digitalization and remote work, to strategic planning combined with strong leadership to accelerate their finance transformation progress.

CFOs and finance leaders are being driven to reevaluate their focus by global economic concerns, such as inflation and other business factors. Amid shifting priorities, they still recognize the importance of the basic tenets of security and analytics in their push to migrate legacy applications into cloud-based systems.

As finance professionals prepare for the potential challenges of 2023, they are indicating that they have many other concerns including leadership, profitability reporting and analysis, financial planning and the impact of inflation. Those last few items illustrate that concerns about inflation are impacting CFOs' priorities and are driving a push towards improving planning and analytics, as well as developing the right leadership to address associated challenges. Leadership will have to be able to understand the impact of the changing costs of goods and how best to address them in the market.



## The Impact of Inflation

Other highly rated concerns highlight the importance for organizations to prepare for the future and to ensure that appropriate planning tools are in place to help the enterprise become future-ready and contend with soaring inflation and rising interest rates.

It also is imperative for organizations to rethink and establish more accurate profitability analysis. Planning and analysis need to be well aligned to allow quick and better decision-making capabilities. As

### Which of the following actions is your organization taking to address concerns or effects from inflationary trends in the market?



Assessing needs for new skills and talent both inside and outside the organization



Negotiating pricing with suppliers



Balancing risk of higher staff attrition against potential compensation increases



Reducing costs of operations



Refining and/or increasing scenario planning



Reassessing working capital needs



Passing higher costs to customers by raising prices



Assessing credit risks to trading partners



Reducing inventory in warehouses

2022

Current finance apps include SAP

organizations weigh the impact of rising costs of goods and capital, it will be key to maintain focus on the various levers available to help navigate the changing circumstances. These actions coupled with the right data and analytics and planning strategies can help to drive better results and agility through the challenges organizations will likely face in the coming months.

## Automation and process improvement

A majority of CFOs and VPs of Finance – 70% – rank automation and process improvement as a top priority for the finance organization over the next 12 months. Automation clearly is top of mind for the CFO as the role expands beyond the purview of traditional finance activities into areas such as ESG, talent management and supply chain, among many others. Due to this shifting of responsibilities, it is becoming imperative for CFOs to commit to ongoing transformation and the implementation of advanced automation and emerging technologies. CFOs can leverage tools available from their SAP system to enable both automation and process improvement including SAP S/4HANA's inherent Process Automation, robotic process automation (RPA), built-in artificial intelligence (AI), and machine learning (ML). For example, SAP's SAC Planning tool can enable transformation for financial planning and analysis (FP&A) processes by integrating sales and operations forecasting, providing comprehensive variance analysis capabilities and integrating management and consolidated reporting across the organization.

### Key actions that will help drive successful automation and process improvement initiatives:

- Frame finance transformation as a set of concrete strategic objectives and incorporate digital opportunities into the business plan to achieve these goals over the long term.
- Identify which finance processes should be eliminated, added or redesigned prior to automating or digitizing them with the help of the best available systems or tools.
- Continually monitor the financial and performance insights and analyses that internal business partners, executives and the board need.
- Keep tabs on the digital maturity and expectations of shareholders, regulators, partners and other external stakeholders.

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