Theme 1: Common safety and security in a diverging world

This theme focuses on security and psychological crisis resilience. The aim is to understand the social, institutional and cultural mechanisms that influence the experience of safety and to identify means to strengthen society's ability to act in the midst of change and uncertainty.

Finland's comprehensive security is built by investing in national defence, internal security, security of supply and critical infrastructure. However, the present theme focuses on psychological security and the functional capacity of the population, which are essential elements of comprehensive security. The experience of safety is built on a sense of belonging, community and trust. In an increasingly diverging world, demographic changes, regional differences, growing economic uncertainty and global crises, for example, challenge the experience of safety and increase the need for a high capacity for adaptability and reform. Increasing inequalities, echo chambers and value conflicts also weaken the readiness to face threats with common goals. The dynamics of the digital operating environment, rapid technological development and security risks associated with increasingly comprehensive data collection may further increase feelings of insecurity. Key issues for this theme include: What sustains trust and the experience of belonging to society in a diverging world? What kinds of social and institutional structures are needed to maintain Finland's common functional capacity? What could be the significance of culture, arts and broad based civilisation in building functional capacity?

This theme examines security as a perceived, social and structural phenomenon and analyses the interconnections of these dimensions in a diverging world. Within the theme, it is essential to study factors that strengthen psychological resilience to crises in the context of various threats and disruptions. The research may focus on supporting good demographic conditions and shared agency, on strengthening faith in the future or on creating new opportunities for participation and influence. The importance of shared democratic values and the role of culture and the arts as forces that create a common worldview can contribute to providing relevant perspectives for the theme. In addition, research under this theme can address the construction of economic security at both the individual and the national level. Individual projects can also study the role of the information environment in building trust and a sense of security.

A cross-disciplinary and interactive approach and stakeholder cooperation are of key importance in exploring the societal structures that maintain comprehensive security.

Theme 2: Strategic resources for the future

This theme focuses on the securing and responsible use of material and digital resources that are strategically important for the future. Strategic resources refer to materials and data whose availability is essential for the development of Finnish society and that involve significant risks related to security of supply, the environment, governance or geopolitics.

The growing demand for strategic resources and global constraints on availability create tensions between ecological sustainability, geopolitics, economic competitiveness and global justice. Closed material cycles, data, competitiveness and security policy are also key issues for the circular economy. Critical resources and their management are unevenly distributed across countries and regions. The sustainable use of strategic resources requires, in addition to technological solutions, changes in both consumption choices and operating methods that shape demand for resources. Key issues for this theme include: What resources are strategically important for Finland's economy and welfare in anticipation of the future? How can these resources be produced, utilised and managed while taking into account planetary boundaries and global responsibility? How can data support the sustainable management of raw materials, and how can data availability be ensured?

The aim of the theme is to produce new knowledge and concrete solutions that support the material self sufficiency of Finland and the EU and strengthen critical value chains in the future. Research projects under this theme can examine resources and the strategic change in the material economy both from a global perspective and from the perspective of Finland's own raw materials. The sustainable cycle of natural resources and materials and the development of related production chains and material flows are also essential to the theme. The research can also focus on the possibilities of data in controlling resource use or in technology development, as well as on data as a strategic resource, for example from the perspectives of data management or self-sufficiency. The sustainability transition is not just a technical or economic challenge. It is essentially linked to social, cultural and ethical dimensions, such as promoting sustainable consumer behaviour or a fair distribution of responsibility and benefits in terms of resources at local and global level.

Interdisciplinary research and close cooperation with businesses, the public sector and other stakeholders are key to exploring the technological, economic and social dimensions of strategic resource use. Partnerships and research ecosystems contribute to strengthening Finland's competitiveness and export opportunities in the field of strategic resources and related expertise.

Cross-cutting priority: Data as power

Data as power is the cross-cutting priority for the 2027 strategic research programmes. Data and data quality, in particular data representativeness, transparency, accessibility, limitations and opportunities for use, are increasingly determining the direction of research. Data has economic and societal power, which makes data quality particularly important. At the same time, data raises important ethical, legal and societal questions, for example regarding ownership, access rights, privacy and security. The utilisation of data is limited by uneven access and identified blind spots, in particular by the under representation of socially vulnerable groups in data.

In the 2027 strategic research programmes, these data-related issues will be examined from the perspective of each research topic. In the data they use and the data collection methods, projects must take into account factors that the Finnish scientific community can use more widely in future. These data related issues and solutions must be clearly described in the project plan.