

Coroners Court

Monthly Suicide Data Report

January 2022 update

15 February 2022



WARNING: This following report includes information on suicides.

For help or information contact **beyondblue** on 1300 224 636, or **Lifeline** on 13 11 14.

Purpose

This report presents the January 2022 update to Victorian suicide statistics. This report was produced under the Coroners Court of Victoria's initiative to release timely and accessible data on suicide across the state.

Victorian Suicide Register

In Victoria all deaths from suspected non-natural causes including suspected suicides are required to be reported to the Coroners Court of Victoria. The Coroners Court reviews newly reported deaths on a daily basis to identify those that occur in circumstances consistent with suicide and adds these deaths to the Victorian Suicide Register (VSR).

The VSR has been in operation since 2012 and is the most accurate and timely data source for suicide in Victoria. VSR data is regularly shared with the Victorian Department of Health, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Victoria Police, health services, and other bodies engaged in suicide prevention to inform their work.

Considerations when interpreting the data

Victoria's suicide frequency varies quite substantially from month to month. Additionally, there can be substantial variation in the monthly and annual frequency of suicides within particular cohorts. This variation, which is not unique to Victoria but is a feature of suicide data around Australia and internationally, usually results from random factors rather than underlying systemic issues or emerging clusters. The data therefore should be interpreted cautiously, with great care taken in drawing conclusions about any apparent increase or decrease that is observed.

Changes in reported frequencies over time

The deaths included in the VSR are regularly reviewed as coroners' investigations progress and more is learned about the circumstances in which they occurred. Deaths may be removed from the VSR if investigation establishes they are likely not to be suicides; likewise, deaths initially missed may be added to the VSR as new evidence consistent with suicide is gathered. This is why some data reported here may be different to what was reported in previous months.

However, data changes are usually minor: VSR analyses have shown that over time, there is consistently less than 5% difference between the number of suicides initially identified as suicides, and the number of deaths ultimately confirmed as suicides.

Monthly data update

1. Year to date frequency by sex

Table 1 shows the frequency of Victorian suicides by deceased sex as at 31 January each year for the period 2018-2022.

Table 1: Year to date (31 January) suicide frequency by sex, Victoria 2018-2022.

Sex	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Male	39	57	56	44	42
Female	7	13	9	14	15
Total	46	70	65	58	57

2. Monthly frequency

Table 2 shows the monthly frequency and aggregate monthly¹ frequency of Victorian suicides for January 2018 through to January 2022.

Table 2: Monthly frequency and aggregate monthly frequency of Victorian suicides, January 2018 to January 2022.

Month	Monthly frequency					Aggregate monthly frequency				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
January	46	70	65	58	57	46	70	65	58	57
February	49	61	66	53		95	131	131	111	
March	65	50	72	70		160	181	203	181	
April	62	49	53	50		222	230	256	231	
May	55	67	57	54		277	297	313	285	
June	50	53	57	56		327	350	370	341	
July	66	56	61	53		393	406	431	394	
August	58	56	58	54		451	462	489	448	
September	54	56	49	51		505	518	538	499	
October	65	66	51	71		570	584	589	570	
November	71	50	68	62		641	634	657	632	
December	62	65	53	59		703	699	710	691	

1 The aggregate monthly frequency is the sum of frequencies for all months so far in each year. For example, the aggregate monthly frequency in March of a year is the sum of the monthly frequencies in January, February and March for that year.

3. Year to date frequency by age group and sex

Table 3a shows the Victorian suicide frequency by deceased sex and age group as at 31 January each year for the period 2018-2022.

Table 3a: Year to date (31 January) suicide frequency by sex and age group, Victoria 2018-2022.

Age group by sex	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Male	39	57	56	44	42
Under 18	1	0	1	1	0
18 to 24	5	12	4	0	7
25 to 34	4	16	9	6	7
35 to 44	7	12	12	10	7
45 to 54	14	4	10	14	11
55 to 64	5	7	12	8	3
65 and over	3	6	8	5	7
Female	7	13	9	14	15
Under 18	1	1	0	3	0
18 to 24	1	1	0	1	2
25 to 34	2	3	2	5	2
35 to 44	0	1	1	4	2
45 to 54	0	3	3	1	3
55 to 64	2	1	0	0	4
65 and over	1	3	3	0	2
Total	46	70	65	58	57
Under 18	2	1	1	4	0
18 to 24	6	13	4	1	9
25 to 34	6	19	11	11	9
35 to 44	7	13	13	14	9
45 to 54	14	7	13	15	14
55 to 64	7	8	12	8	7
65 and over	4	9	11	5	9

To assist in interpreting this data, Table 3b was collated (over page) showing Victoria's annual suicide frequency by sex and age group for the complete years 2018-2021. Table 3b illustrates that, while there may be quite substantial short-term fluctuations in suicide frequencies within particular groups, these usually even out over time.

Table 3b: Annual suicide frequency by sex and age group, Victoria 2018-2021.

Age group by sex	2018	2019	2020	2021
Male	519	529	530	519
Under 18	11	13	16	10
18 to 24	62	64	62	51
25 to 34	99	110	93	95
35 to 44	89	107	96	91
45 to 54	106	89	90	104
55 to 64	76	78	90	73
65 and over	76	68	83	95
Female	184	170	180	172
Under 18	5	9	3	13
18 to 24	20	17	16	27
25 to 34	41	27	44	37
35 to 44	36	28	35	28
45 to 54	24	33	27	25
55 to 64	31	26	26	22
65 and over	27	30	29	20
Total	703	699	710	691
Under 18	16	22	19	23
18 to 24	82	81	78	78
25 to 34	140	137	137	132
35 to 44	125	135	131	119
45 to 54	130	122	117	129
55 to 64	107	104	116	95
65 and over	103	98	112	115

4. Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria

Table 4a shows the year to date suicide frequency as at 31 January in Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria, for the years 2018 to 2022. Table 4b (over page) shows the same data but represented as proportions of all suicides rather than as frequencies.

Table 4a: Year to date (31 January) suicide frequency by location of fatal incident, Victoria 2018-2022.

Location of fatal incident	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Metropolitan Melbourne	35	37	40	39	39
Regional Victoria	11	33	25	19	18
Total	46	70	65	58	57

Table 4b: Year to date (31 January) suicide proportion by location of fatal incident, Victoria 2018-2022.

Location of fatal incident	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Metropolitan Melbourne	76%	53%	62%	67%	68%
Regional Victoria	24%	47%	38%	33%	32%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

To assist in interpreting this data, Tables 4c and 4d show the annual suicide frequency and proportion in Metropolitan Melbourne compared to Regional Victoria for the complete years 2017-2020.

Table 4c: Annual suicide frequency by location of fatal incident, Victoria 2018-2021.

Location of fatal incident	2018	2019	2020	2021
Metropolitan Melbourne	466	449	471	441
Regional Victoria	237	250	239	250
Total	703	699	710	691

Table 4d: Annual suicide proportion by location of fatal incident, Victoria 2018-2021.

Location of fatal incident	2018	2019	2020	2021
Metropolitan Melbourne	66%	64%	66%	64%
Regional Victoria	34%	36%	34%	36%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%