

Coroners Court

Monthly Suicide Data Report

April 2022 update

26 May 2022

65





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 April 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 the end of April each year, for the period 2018-2022.

Table 1: Year to date (month end March) suicide frequency by sex, Victoria 2018-2022.

Sex	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Male	171	172	195	178	159
Female	51	60	54	53	72
Total	222	232	249	231	231

2. Monthly frequency

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

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

Month	Monthly frequency					Aggregate monthly frequency				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
January	46	71	65	59	58	46	71	65	59	58
February	50	61	61	52	55	96	132	126	111	113
March	65	50	71	70	64	161	182	197	181	177
April	61	50	52	50	54	222	232	249	231	231
May	54	67	55	54		276	299	304	285	
June	50	53	55	56		326	352	359	341	
July	64	56	61	54		390	408	420	395	
August	56	56	59	54		446	464	479	449	
September	54	56	49	51		500	520	528	500	
October	64	64	51	73		564	584	579	573	
November	71	50	68	63		635	634	647	636	
December	62	65	53	59		697	699	700	695	

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 the end of April each year, for the period 2018-2022.

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

Age group by sex	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Male					
Under 18	3	1	7	3	0
18 to 24	20	21	22	16	13
25 to 34	36	45	33	35	27
35 to 44	35	36	38	31	28
45 to 54	34	25	34	30	41
55 to 64	22	24	36	31	13
65 and over	21	20	25	32	37
Total	171	172	195	178	159
Female					
Under 18	2	1	2	4	2
18 to 24	7	6	4	6	8
25 to 34	9	9	10	15	13
35 to 44	11	12	10	9	12
45 to 54	7	13	10	10	11
55 to 64	8	7	7	8	10
65 and over	7	12	11	1	16
Total	51	60	54	53	72
All people					
Under 18	5	2	9	7	2
18 to 24	27	27	26	22	21
25 to 34	45	54	43	50	40
35 to 44	46	48	48	40	40
45 to 54	41	38	44	40	52
55 to 64	30	31	43	39	23
65 and over	28	32	36	33	53
Total	222	232	249	231	231

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				
Under 18	11	13	16	10
18 to 24	62	64	61	51
25 to 34	99	110	92	95
35 to 44	88	107	96	92
45 to 54	105	89	89	105
55 to 64	76	78	89	73
65 and over	75	68	82	97
Total	516	529	525	523
Female				
Under 18	5	8	3	13
18 to 24	19	17	15	27
25 to 34	40	27	45	38
35 to 44	35	28	33	28
45 to 54	24	33	26	25
55 to 64	31	26	26	22
65 and over	27	31	27	19
Total	181	170	175	172
All people				
Under 18	16	21	19	23
18 to 24	81	81	76	78
25 to 34	139	137	137	133
35 to 44	123	135	129	120
45 to 54	129	122	115	130
55 to 64	107	104	115	95
65 and over	102	99	109	116
Total	697	699	700	695

4. Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria

Table 4a shows the year to date suicide frequency as at the end of April 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 (month end April) suicide frequency by location of fatal incident, Victoria 2018-2022.

Location of fatal incident	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Metropolitan Melbourne	153	146	168	145	153
Regional Victoria	69	86	81	86	78
Total	222	232	249	231	231

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

Location of fatal incident	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Metropolitan Melbourne	69%	63%	67%	63%	66%
Regional Victoria	31%	37%	33%	37%	34%
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 2018-2021.

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

Location of fatal incident	2018	2019	2020	2021
Metropolitan Melbourne	461	448	464	444
Regional Victoria	236	251	236	251
Total	697	699	700	695

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%