

Coroners Court

Monthly Suicide Data Report

August 2022 update

21 September 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 August 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 August each year, for the period 2018-2022.

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

Sex	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Male	334	348	358	339	347
Female	112	117	119	113	126
Total	446	465	477	452	473

2. Monthly frequency

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

Table 2: Monthly frequency and aggregate monthly frequency of Victorian suicides, January 2018 to August 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	51	54	96	132	126	110	112
March	65	50	71	70	66	161	182	197	180	178
April	61	50	52	51	56	222	232	249	231	234
May	54	67	55	55	56	276	299	304	286	290
June	50	53	53	58	60	326	352	357	344	350
July	64	56	61	55	54	390	408	418	399	404
August	56	57	59	53	69	446	465	477	452	473
September	54	55	49	51		500	520	526	503	
October	64	64	51	74		564	584	577	577	
November	71	50	68	61		635	634	645	638	
December	62	65	53	55		697	699	698	693	

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 August each year, for the period 2018-2022.

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

Age group by sex	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Male					
Under 18	8	7	10	8	4
18 to 24	40	43	42	34	32
25 to 34	74	84	64	63	63
35 to 44	58	71	65	60	59
45 to 54	66	52	56	64	81
55 to 64	45	54	60	45	43
65 and over	43	37	61	65	65
Total	334	348	358	339	347
Female					
Under 18	4	5	2	8	2
18 to 24	12	11	10	14	10
25 to 34	25	16	30	26	20
35 to 44	21	19	23	20	23
45 to 54	14	26	15	20	25
55 to 64	21	17	17	13	19
65 and over	15	23	22	12	27
Total	112	117	119	113	126
All people					
Under 18	12	12	12	16	6
18 to 24	52	54	52	48	42
25 to 34	99	100	94	89	83
35 to 44	79	90	88	80	82
45 to 54	80	78	71	84	106
55 to 64	66	71	77	58	62
65 and over	58	60	83	77	92
Total	446	465	477	452	473

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	52
25 to 34	99	110	92	93
35 to 44	88	106	96	90
45 to 54	105	89	89	103
55 to 64	76	78	88	73
65 and over	75	68	82	97
Total	516	528	524	518
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	32	29
45 to 54	24	33	27	25
55 to 64	31	26	26	22
65 and over	27	32	26	21
Total	181	171	174	175
All people				
Under 18	16	21	19	23
18 to 24	81	81	76	79
25 to 34	139	137	137	131
35 to 44	123	134	128	119
45 to 54	129	122	116	128
55 to 64	107	104	114	95
65 and over	102	100	108	118
Total	697	699	698	693

4. Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria

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

Location of fatal incident	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Metropolitan Melbourne	298	296	314	285	317
Regional Victoria	148	169	163	167	156
Total	446	465	477	452	473

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

Location of fatal incident	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Metropolitan Melbourne	67%	64%	66%	63%	67%
Regional Victoria	33%	36%	34%	37%	33%
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	449	463	444
Regional Victoria	236	250	235	249
Total	697	699	698	693

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%