

Coroners Court

Monthly Suicide Data Report

December 2022 update

6 February 2023



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 December 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 from month to month. Additionally, there can be variation in the monthly and annual frequency of suicides by sex and age group. 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 December each year, for the period 2018-2022.

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

Sex	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Male	517	528	518	518	560
Female	180	172	173	175	196
Total	697	700	691	693	756

2. Monthly frequency

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

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

Month	Monthly frequency					Aggregate monthly frequency				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
January	46	70	63	59	56	46	70	63	59	56
February	50	61	59	51	54	96	131	122	110	110
March	65	50	69	70	65	161	181	191	180	175
April	61	50	55	51	56	222	231	246	231	231
May	54	69	52	55	56	276	300	298	286	287
June	50	53	52	58	61	326	353	350	344	348
July	64	56	61	55	55	390	409	411	399	403
August	56	57	59	53	70	446	466	470	452	473
September	53	55	49	52	77	499	521	519	504	550
October	64	64	51	74	75	563	585	570	578	625
November	71	50	68	60	65	634	635	638	638	690
December	63	65	53	55	66	697	700	691	693	756

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 3 shows the Victorian suicide frequency by deceased sex and age group as at the end of December each year, for the period 2018-2022.

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

Age group by sex	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Male					
Under 18	11	13	16	10	11
18 to 24	62	64	61	52	50
25 to 34	99	110	92	93	107
35 to 44	89	105	94	90	94
45 to 54	105	89	87	103	115
55 to 64	76	78	88	73	69
65 and over	75	69	80	97	114
Total	517	528	518	518	560
Female					
Under 18	5	8	3	13	4
18 to 24	19	17	15	27	15
25 to 34	40	27	45	38	35
35 to 44	35	28	31	29	32
45 to 54	23	33	26	25	40
55 to 64	31	26	26	22	28
65 and over	27	33	27	21	42
Total	180	172	173	175	196
All people					
Under 18	16	21	19	23	15
18 to 24	81	81	76	79	65
25 to 34	139	137	137	131	142
35 to 44	124	133	125	119	126
45 to 54	128	122	113	128	155
55 to 64	107	104	114	95	97
65 and over	102	102	107	118	156
Total	697	700	691	693	756

4. Year to date frequency by location of fatal incident

Table 4a shows the suicide frequency as at the end of December in Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria, for the years 2018 to 2022. Table 4b shows the same data but represented as proportions of all suicides rather than as frequencies.

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

Location of fatal incident	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Metropolitan Melbourne	460	450	459	444	493
Regional Victoria	237	250	232	249	263
Total	697	700	691	693	756

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

Location of fatal incident	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Metropolitan Melbourne	66%	64%	66%	64%	65%
Regional Victoria	34%	36%	34%	36%	35%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%