

# Coroners Court

# 2023 Annual Suicide Data Report

16 February 2024





**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 2023 annual 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**

There can be substantial variation in the monthly and annual frequency of suicides in Victoria 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 previously.

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.

# Annual update

## 1. Annual frequency by sex

Table 1 shows the annual frequency of Victorian suicides by deceased sex for the period 2019-2023.

**Table 1:** Annual suicide frequency by sex, Victoria 2019-2023.

Sex	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Male	527	511	508	560	576
Female	170	166	171	201	225
<b>Total</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>801</b>

## 2. Monthly frequency

Table 2 shows the monthly frequency and aggregate monthly<sup>1</sup> frequency by year of Victorian suicides for the period 2019-2023.

**Table 2:** Monthly frequency and aggregate monthly frequency of suicides, Victoria 2019-2023.

Month	Monthly frequency					Aggregate monthly frequency				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
January	70	61	59	54	72	70	61	59	54	72
February	61	61	51	55	61	131	122	110	109	133
March	50	64	67	63	55	181	186	177	172	188
April	51	53	49	57	69	232	239	226	229	257
May	68	51	54	55	66	300	290	280	284	323
June	51	52	57	66	47	351	342	337	350	370
July	56	56	54	56	66	407	398	391	406	436
August	57	59	51	72	63	464	457	442	478	499
September	56	48	50	71	73	520	505	492	549	572
October	64	51	73	77	87	584	556	565	626	659
November	48	68	60	66	74	632	624	625	692	733
December	65	53	54	69	68	697	677	679	761	801

<sup>1</sup> 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. Annual frequency by age group and sex

Table 3 shows the annual frequency of suicides in Victoria by deceased sex and age group for the period 2019-2023.

**Table 3:** Annual suicide frequency by sex and age group, Victoria 2019-2023.

Age group by sex	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Male</b>					
Under 18	12	16	10	10	16
18 to 24	64	60	49	52	53
25 to 34	110	91	91	107	105
35 to 44	105	92	91	95	120
45 to 54	89	86	102	114	108
55 to 64	78	86	74	71	86
65 and over	69	80	91	111	88
<b>Total</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>576</b>
<b>Female</b>					
Under 18	8	3	13	4	10
18 to 24	17	13	27	15	20
25 to 34	26	44	37	35	45
35 to 44	27	30	28	34	48
45 to 54	33	26	24	41	41
55 to 64	26	23	23	31	22
65 and over	33	27	19	41	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>225</b>
<b>All people</b>					
Under 18	20	19	23	14	26
18 to 24	81	73	76	67	73
25 to 34	136	135	128	142	150
35 to 44	132	122	119	129	168
45 to 54	122	112	126	155	149
55 to 64	104	109	97	102	108
65 and over	102	107	110	152	127
<b>Total</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>801</b>

## 4. Annual frequency by location of fatal incident

Table 4a shows the annual suicide frequency in Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria, for the period 2019 to 2023. Table 4b shows the same data but represented as proportions of all suicides rather than as frequencies.

**Table 4a:** Annual suicide frequency by location of fatal incident, Victoria 2019-2023.

Location of fatal incident	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Metropolitan	449	448	436	498	520
Regional	248	229	243	263	281
<b>Total</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>801</b>

**Table 4b:** Annual suicide proportion by location of fatal incident, Victoria 2019-2023.

Location of fatal incident	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Metropolitan	64%	66%	64%	65%	65%
Regional	36%	34%	36%	35%	35%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>