

The background of the cover is a dark, low-angle photograph of a modern building with large glass windows and a prominent overhang. The image is dimly lit, with some interior lights visible through the glass. In the foreground, there are some blurred figures of people walking. A large, semi-transparent number '65' is overlaid on the lower left side of the image.

# Coroners Court

## Monthly Suicide Data Report

December 2021 update

20 January 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 December 2021 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. Annual frequency by sex

Table 1 shows the annual frequency of Victorian suicides by deceased sex for the period 2017-2021.

**Table 1:** Annual suicide frequency by sex, Victoria 2017-2021.

Sex	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Male	504	519	530	532	516
Female	180	184	170	180	167
<b>Total</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>703</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>683</b>

## 2. Monthly frequency

Table 2 shows the monthly frequency and aggregate monthly<sup>1</sup> frequency of Victorian suicides for January 2017 through to December 2021.

**Table 2:** Monthly frequency and aggregate monthly frequency of Victorian suicides, January 2017 to December 2021.

Monthly frequency						Aggregate monthly frequency				
Month	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
January	60	46	70	65	56	60	46	70	65	56
February	51	49	61	65	51	111	95	131	130	107
March	69	65	50	74	69	180	160	181	204	176
April	50	62	49	53	49	230	222	230	257	225
May	49	55	67	58	54	279	277	297	315	279
June	54	50	53	57	56	333	327	350	372	335
July	64	66	56	63	53	397	393	406	435	388
August	59	58	57	57	54	456	451	463	492	442
September	38	54	56	49	51	494	505	519	541	493
October	64	65	66	51	70	558	570	585	592	563
November	59	71	50	68	62	617	641	635	660	625
December	67	62	65	52	58	684	703	700	712	683

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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. Annual frequency by age group and sex

Table 3 shows the annual suicide frequency by deceased sex and age group in Victoria for the period 2017-2021.

**Table 3:** Annual suicide frequency by sex and age group, Victoria 2017-2021.

Age group by sex	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Male</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>516</b>
Under 18	11	11	13	16	10
18 to 24	43	62	64	62	51
25 to 34	99	99	110	93	95
35 to 44	96	89	108	97	91
45 to 54	106	106	89	91	103
55 to 64	70	76	78	90	73
65 and over	79	76	68	83	93
<b>Female</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>167</b>
Under 18	5	5	9	3	13
18 to 24	18	20	17	16	27
25 to 34	34	41	27	44	36
35 to 44	33	36	28	34	27
45 to 54	38	24	33	28	24
55 to 64	23	31	26	26	20
65 and over	29	27	30	29	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>703</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>683</b>
Under 18	16	16	22	19	23
18 to 24	61	82	81	78	78
25 to 34	133	140	137	137	131
35 to 44	129	125	136	131	118
45 to 54	144	130	122	119	127
55 to 64	93	107	104	116	93
65 and over	108	103	98	112	113

### 4. Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria

Table 4a (over page) shows the annual suicide frequency in Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria, for the years 2017 to 2021. Table 4b (over page) 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 2017-2021.

Location of fatal incident	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Metropolitan Melbourne	467	466	450	472	435
Regional Victoria	217	237	250	240	248
<b>Total</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>703</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>683</b>

**Table 4b:** Annual suicide proportion by location of fatal incident, Victoria 2017-2021.

Location of fatal incident	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Metropolitan Melbourne	68%	66%	64%	66%	64%
Regional Victoria	32%	34%	36%	34%	36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>