

2021–2022 Annual report summary



Our greatest resource

Our small and industrious team continues to work diligently to promote, support and strengthen our sector. Our wonderful team is highly skilled, conscientious, and resilient and has continued to accomplish much in challenging times. Following the permanent closure of our city office, we are committed to ensuring steadfast, strong connections and communication of a remotely based team. We conduct weekly video meetings, and monthly team days using a shared working space in the city, use group collaboration software platforms and do some co-location at branches. We will continue to monitor and review these arrangements to ensure our team remains engaged and effective.

Sector development

We have continued to provide a range of sector development activities to our member agencies to strengthen their services and promote best-practice. These activities have included network meetings, practical resources, training, the student placement program, and individual guidance and support. We are in daily communication with our member agencies, allowing constant opportunities for us to hear, collect and respond to information and news from the frontline. We consistently receive positive feedback about our training programs, and

engagement with online content remains high. During this year, we conducted a comprehensive review and redesign of our Community Support Workers Course, ensuring our content is up-to-date, relevant and engaging.

Advocacy

While we continue to focus on three primary advocacy areas, housing, inadequate welfare payments and school costs, we've expanded our remit to cover other important issues for our members and the people they work with. These include sector sustainability, utility costs, dental health, family violence, and asylum seekers and refugees. In advocating for these issues, we've undertaken a range of activities including our highly engaging and successful Origami House campaign, letters to politicians, policy submissions to government departments and decision-makers, radio interviews, newspaper articles, and letters to the editor. Our sector's work and understanding of utilities hardship for vulnerable and disadvantaged communities continues to be recognised, demonstrated through ongoing consultations by key bodies and the successful application of related tenders for delivery in the next financial year.

We have 53 member agencies

Delivering services from **63 sites**

CISVic operates **3 branches**

We had a collective **541,939 individual contacts**

This is a **13% increase** on last year's total contacts

Key achievements

Service delivery

We continue to oversee three branches – former member agencies whose service would have been lost without our intervention. Like the broader sector, our branches have faced challenges over this period with reduced capacity and increased demand but have persevered, delivering high-quality, critical crisis support to people in need.

Financial and well-being programs

Our Department of Social Services Emergency Relief and Financial Counselling programs once again received additional funding due to the Federal Governments COVID response. This much-welcomed funding was crucial in delivering enhanced support to the community. We maintain regular contact with the Department, sharing important insights about systemic issues, service responses and good news stories.

Volunteer Management program

In its final year of operation, our Volunteers of Banyule program was re-focused in line with contractual arrangements, to engage and promote volunteering with three specific target groups. Re-focusing the program for a 12-month contract was not without its challenges, but we effectively engaged with key stakeholders and prepared the community and volunteering involving organisations we supported for new arrangements post-June 2022.

Strategic plan review

We have re-commenced a review of our strategic plan, a process that was interrupted by COVID in 2020. In consultation with the Board, staff and members, we are comprehensively reviewing our mission and goals and look forward to presenting a new plan in early 2023.



Our services are delivered by trained staff, many of whom are volunteers. Services are confidential, respectful, and in a caring and compassionate manner.



Information & referral

Our members provide free information and referral service on topics such as housing, health, personal issues, families, education and much more. Referrals are made to the appropriate government or community services and other not-for-profit organisations.



Advocacy

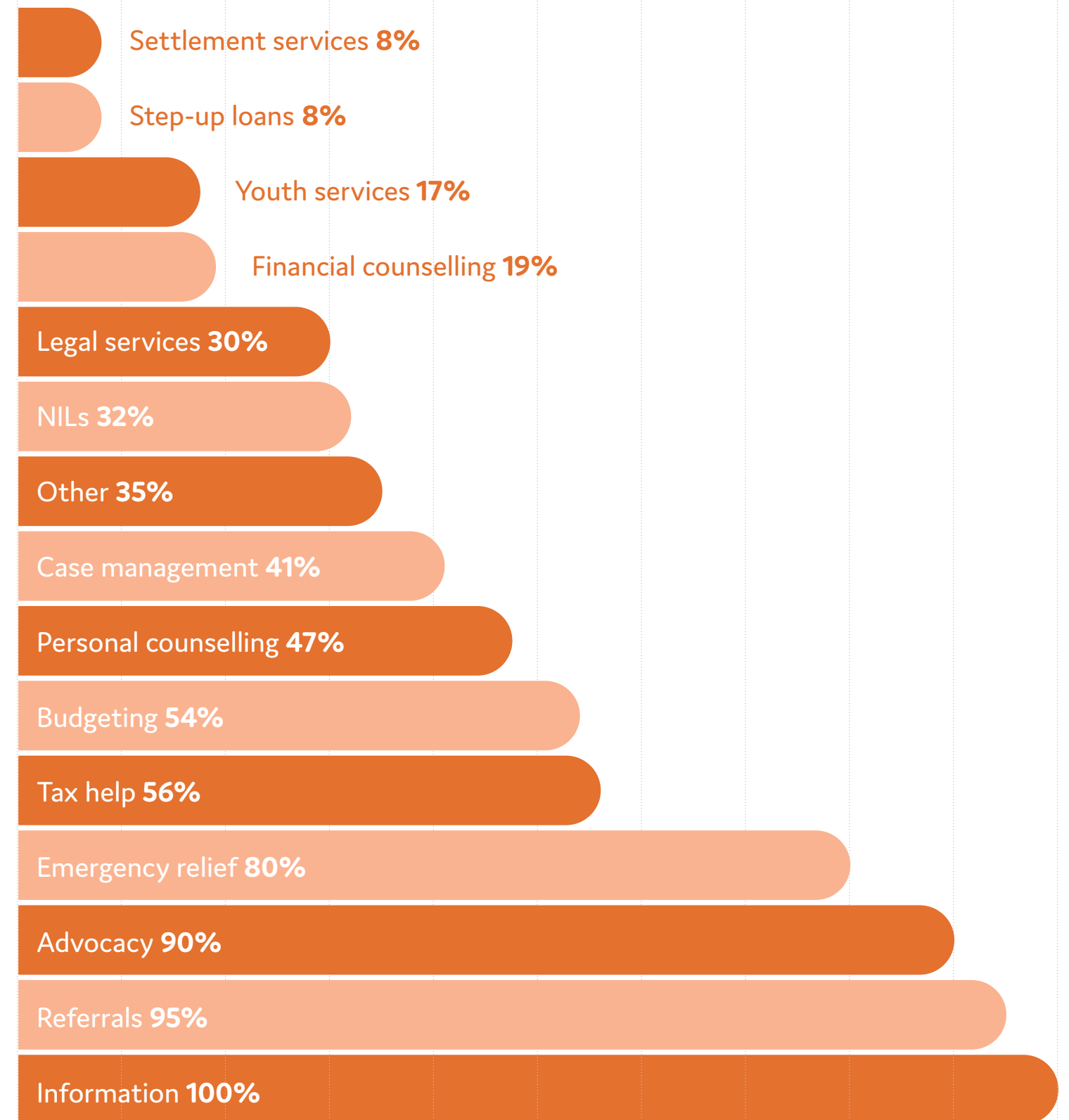
Our members can act on behalf of people to negotiate payments and discuss issues with a range of service providers, including:

- Utilities (gas, electricity, water)
- Telephone companies
- Centrelink
- Real estate agents
- Government departments



Emergency relief

Food, food vouchers and other assistance are provided to local residents experiencing financial hardship.



25

e-bulletin were produced to a subscriber base of 821 (a **7%** increase in subscribers)

17%

increase in **Facebook followers**

We use social media platforms to share key news and information, acknowledge special events, and advocate for our core issues.

41%

increase in social media posts across all platforms

871 posts on Facebook (CISVic and branches)

57 Instagram posts

104 Tweets with 11,979 impressions

Conducted **6** statewide members' meetings

Attended **6** regional network meetings

Conducted **6** Case Workers Network meetings

Conducted **6** Energy Mentors Community of Practice meetings

Conducted **2** Volunteer Coordinator's Meetings

Supported **9** members with volunteer recruitment

Primary areas of advocacy:

Housing and homelessness

Centrelink payment levels

Schools costs

Secondary areas of advocacy:

Affordable dental treatment

Utilities and energy

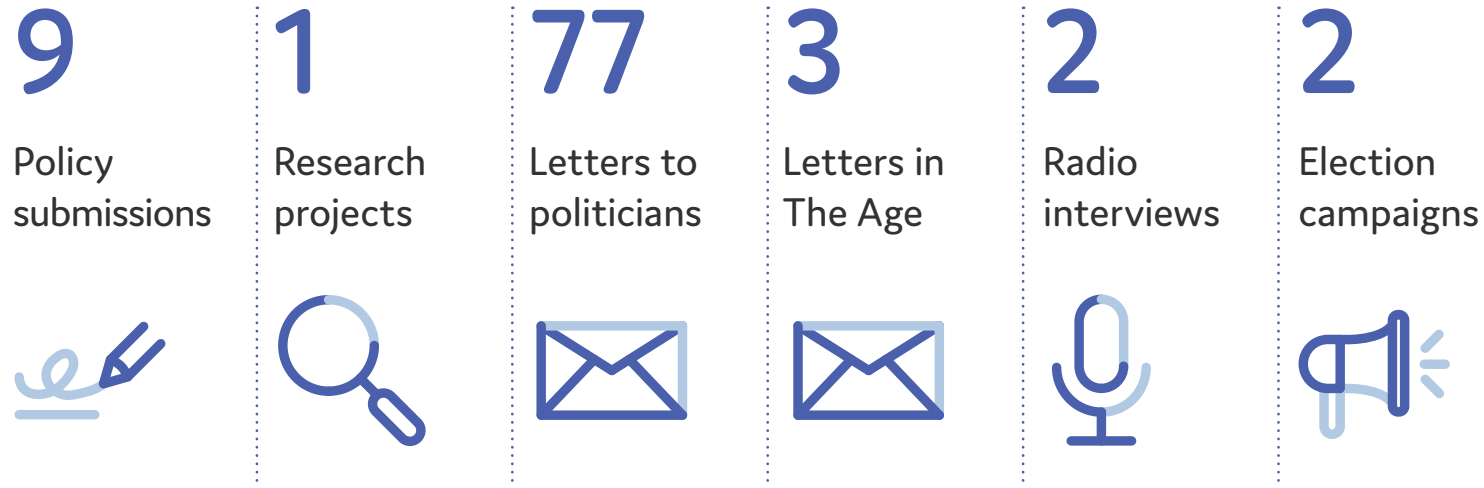
Sustainable funding for the sector

Asylum seekers and refugees

Family violence

Climate change

Primary areas of advocacy:



CISVic had a goal to fold and collect 7000 origami houses to represent the number of public and social houses needed every year in Victoria for the next 10 years. We wanted to raise awareness about the homelessness crisis. We ended up with over 8000 houses created by the CISVic team, member agencies and the community. We built our "Origami House" using a wooden frame and strings of paper houses. The campaign was launched by actor and media personality Benjamin Law and live-streamed. The Origami House became a travelling exhibition, visiting 5 sites (Scoresby, Mornington, Docklands, Footscray and Albert Park) across Greater Melbourne before it was allowed to be destroyed by the elements at the 5th location.

As our house has travelled from shelter to shelter, the strings of origami have gotten a little tangled and the wooden frame a little wobbly. We've done our best to repair as we go but each location came with unique challenges, some more exposed to the elements than others. Without a permanent place to call home, the cycle of moving, fracturing and repairing will continue. This cycle is a reminder of what homeless people face every day.

As the display degrades, we want decision-makers to think about people who are forced to move from place to place or live on the streets. It's nearly impossible to be your best self when you don't have a stable and safe place to live and all your energy goes to surviving each day."

Campaign activities and guidelines were created for member agencies to connect with local MPs, decision-makers, and local media.

The campaign was covered on Channel Nine and in at least two local newspapers.

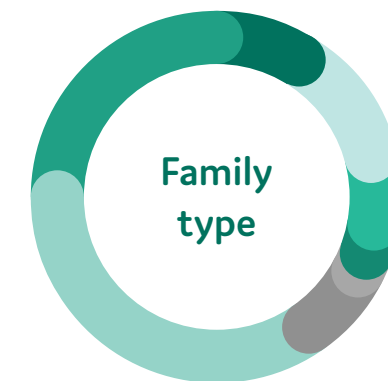


\$3,213,207.17
in ER funding
distributed

During this period, we supported **622 clients**,
a **37% increase** from previous year



- 64% Female
- 35% Male
- 1% Other



- 9% Couple
- 12% Couple with dependant(s)
- 7% Groups (related adults)
- 3% Groups (unrelated adults)
- 2% Homeless/No household
- 7% Not stated/Inadequately described
- 35% Single (person living alone)
- 25% Sole parent with dependant(s)



- 50% 20-39 y.o.
- 39% 40-64 y.o.
- 11% 65 y.o. +

81% of people whose main source
of income is Government payments/
pensions/allowances



Housing

33% of people who access our services live in a private rental.

20% of people who access our services live in a public rental.

16% of people who access our services are experiencing homelessness.

4% of people who access our services have a mortgage

1 in 3

CISVic agencies are 100% volunteer-run



Essential services

An **average of 3,770 per month** have been helped to apply for the new **\$250 Power Saving Bonus** by CISVic member agencies across the Melbourne metropolitan area and country Victoria.

34% of people who access our services sought assistance, in part, due to **utility and phone expenses**.

9 in 10

CISVic agencies have been disrupted by volunteer shortages



Food

88% of people who access our services were experiencing **food insecurity**.



We provided over **\$2,500,000** worth of **food parcels**



We provided over **\$1,100,000** worth of **food vouchers**



Medication

17% of people who access our services sought assistance, in part, due to **medical expenses**



We provided over **\$60,000** worth of **financial assistance** to cover vital healthcare expenses.

21,473
community members

made

82,458
visits to agencies

Over **258,025** support services were provided.

Support services include the provision of information, referrals, advocacy, food parcels, petrol vouchers, pharmaceutical vouchers, utility relief grant applications, power saving bonus applications, baked goods, or pet food.

- 34%** of our community members sought assistance, in part, due to utility and phone expenses
- 52%** of our community members sought assistance, in part, due to housing expenses
- 53%** of our community members were aged 40-64 years of age
- 60%** of our community members were female.
- 21%** of our community members were sole parents with dependents
- 33%** of our community members lived in private rentals
- 76%** of our community members recieved government payments/pensions/allowances
- 36%** of community members were visiting a service for the very first time

Course	Sessions
CISVic portal training video	43 registrations
Community Support Workers (CSW) Course	6 sessions, 87 participants
CSW Refresher Course Working Smarter Not Harder	2 sessions, 40 participants
Dealing with Challenging Behaviours	1 session, 11 participants
Indigenous Cultural Awareness video	84 registrations
Working with Interpreters video	63 registrations
A conversation with Victoria's Energy & Water Ombudsman	6 registrations
VITAL sessions: Supporting People with Energy Hardship x 2 Reducing the uptake of payday lenders Understanding the role of Financial Counsellors	197 registrations

'I really enjoyed the CSW course. What I learned from the course directly related with the tasks I conduct at the community organisation I am volunteering for. I enjoyed (the) lectures by (trainer) and also enjoyed real word stories of other students that they shared during the class meeting.'
– CSW attendee

'Many of the resources (videos, doco and links) were excellent and very useful. Zoom was effective and convenient. The contributions from different participants with different experiences was another big plus.' **– CSW attendee**

"Thank you for a great information session. Information sessions are so valuable to help us assist our clients"
– VITAL attendee

This year we introduced our first ever foray into podcasting; **Vital Gone Viral; Making Conversations Matter.**

Two episodes were released, featuring presenters Jill Wilson and Meagan Skehill, and guest speakers from the membership.



COVID conversations
 Nov 2021 (83 plays)



Financial Counselling,
 Feb 2022 (30 plays)

Volunteer Management Program

Funded by Volunteering Victoria, this program aimed to increase opportunities for people from target groups to participate in the social and economic life of their broader community through volunteering.

The priority groups for this program included people with a disability, First Nations People, and newly arrived migrants.



5

volunteer manager network meetings conducted



10

online newsletters delivered



63

one-on-one episodes of support to local volunteer-involving organisations around risk management and volunteer recruitment



238

volunteers have registered for the Indigenous Cultural Awareness online training

Student placements

To support organisational capacity and provide rich learning opportunities, we support student placements



RMIT Social Work students:
13 students across 9 agencies



TAFE Certificate or Diploma in Community Services
13 students across 8 agencies



The Board

Anjali Ilesley, Treasurer
Anne Catanese
Bill Morton
Hiyah Rahman
Ian Parker
Jenny Elvey
John Lambert, Vice President
Karyn Doyle
Kathy Hosie
Leanne Petrides, President

CISVic team

Anne-Marie Yung, Office Coordinator
Deborah Rosenberg, Student Program Coordinator
Freya Kulasegram, Media & Communications Officer
Helen Byrne, Trainer
Dr Jennifer Borrell, Advocacy & Research
Jill Wilson, Volunteer Development
Kate Wheller Executive Officer
Meagan Skehill, Sector Development
Simone Reynolds, Project Officer
Zoe Evans, Sector Support Officer

CIS Glen Eira

Anne Coughlin, Branch Coordinator (until Oct 2021)
Daniela Markovic, Case Worker (until Oct 2021)/ Branch Coordinator
Louise Howe, Administration Officer

CIS Moreland

Claire Kartsidimas, Branch Coordinator
Kylie Farrugia, Case Worker-Food & Material Aid Worker

CIS Yarra Ranges

Christine Falzon, Branch Coordinator

Members

Full Members

Access Health & Community (Camcare)
Banyule Support & Information Centre Inc
Bayside Community & Information Support Service
Bendigo Family & Financial Services
Casey North Community Information & Support Service Inc
Chelsea Community Support Services Inc
Cobram Family & Financial Services
Community Support Frankston Inc
Community Information & Support Cranbourne
Darebin Information, Volunteer & Resource Service Inc

Diamond Valley Community Support Inc
Doncare Community Services
Knox Infolink Inc
Maroondah Community Assist
Mentone Community Assistance & Information Bureau Inc
Monash Oakleigh Community Support & Information Service Inc
Monash Waverley Community Information & Support Inc
Morningside Community Information & Support Centre
Port Phillip Community Group
Shepparton Family & Financial Service
South Gippsland Citizens Advice Bureau Inc
Southern Peninsula Community Centre
South East Community Links Inc
Stonnington Community Assist Uniting (Victoria & Tasmania) Ltd
Uniting (Victoria & Tasmania) Ltd
Western Port Community Support
Whitehorse Emergency Relief & Support Inc
Whittlesea Community Connections Inc

Associate Members

Albury Wodonga Regional Foodshare
Ardoch Limited
Australia Help Limited
Ballarat Foundation United Way Inc
Bendigo Foodshare Inc
Bendigo Volunteer Resource Centre Inc

CityLife Community Care
Council of Single Mothers and their Children Vic
Countrywide Community Missions Victoria Inc
Diamond Valley Foodshare Inc
Eastern Emergency Relief Network Inc
Endeavour Ministries Inc
Friends for Good Inc
Healesville Interchurch Community Care Incorporated
IndianCare Incorporated
Laverton Community Integrated Services
LINC Church Services Network Yarra Valley Inc
Make a difference DINGLEY VILLAGE INC
North East Citizen Advocacy Inc
OZ Assist Inc
Shepparton Foodshare Incorporated
Somali Australian Council of Victoria
Sunraysia Information & Referral Service Inc
The Gianna Centre Inc
Volunteer West
Volunteering Geelong Inc
Women Wellbeing Australia Inc

Branches

CIS Glen Eira – 25 volunteers and 4 Community Services students
CIS Moreland – 14 volunteers and 9 Community Services students
CIS Yarra Ranges – 30 volunteers and 6 Community Services students



CISVic Community Information
& Support Victoria

Contact us

Community Information and Support Victoria

1134 Glen Huntly Rd, Glen Huntly, Vic, 3163

Call 9672 2000

Email admin@cisvic.org.au

Visit www.cisvic.org.au

Helping local communities