

Resources and latest news about Zika virus disease available from ECDC

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On 1 February 2016, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) following a meeting of the recently established 'International Health Regulations (2005) Emergency Committee on Zika virus and observed increase in neurological disorders and neonatal malformations' and the rapid spread of the disease in the Americas [1]. At the meeting, the Committee advised that the recent cluster of microcephaly cases and other neurologic disorders reported in Brazil, following a similar cluster in French Polynesia in 2014, constitutes a PHEIC.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) has monitored the Zika outbreaks in the Pacific Region and Latin America since onset of the respective outbreaks, and provides updates and resources in various formats such as daily updated maps of the countries and territories with reported confirmed autochthonous cases of Zika virus infection [2], fact sheets for professionals, risk assessments and epidemiological updates reflecting changes in the evolution of the epidemic [3] on its website. The weekly ECDC communicable disease threat report, summarises information gathered through epidemic intelligence by ECDC regarding communicable disease threats of concern to the European Union. It also includes updated information on the global situation and changes in the epidemiology of Zika virus [4].

As of 4 February 2016, no autochthonous Zika virus transmission had been reported in the continental European Union (EU). In 2015 and 2016, in several EU countries there were imported cases who had recently travelled in affected countries/territories. Several outermost EU regions continue to report Zika virus autochthonous circulation: French Guiana Guadeloupe, Martinique, Saint Martin and, Curacao (an independent state and part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands) reported an autochthonous case [2]. Widespread transmission is also present in Cape Verde and sporadic

Zika virus outbreaks have been described in Africa and South Asia since the virus was discovered for the first time in Uganda in 1947. In 2013–14 a large outbreak occurred in the Pacific region, especially in French Polynesia. In 2015, the Pacific region experienced another outbreak and in May 2015, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and several Latin American authorities reported cases. The recent outbreaks in French Polynesia, Brazil and other Latin America countries led to reports of potential neurological and autoimmune complications of Zika virus disease. Moreover, in Brazil and in other countries in Latin America, there were signals that a strong association between Zika virus infection and congenital abnormalities, including microcephaly, could exist when pregnant women were infected.

Read more in the articles published on Zika virus infection in *Eurosurveillance*.

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