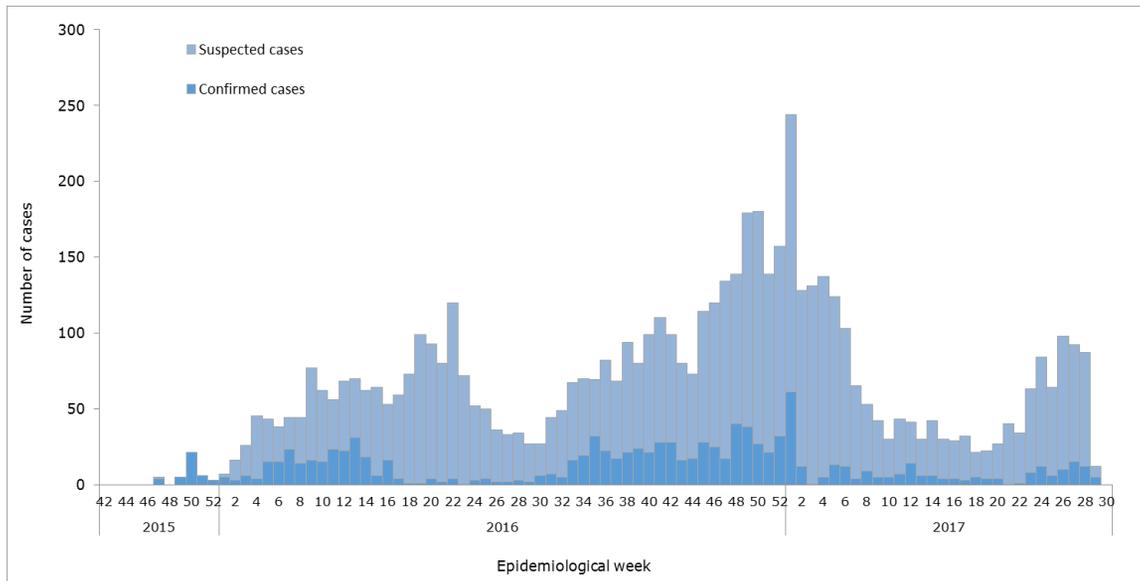


# Zika-Epidemiological Report Panama

25 September 2017

**Figure 1.** Suspected and confirmed Zika cases. Panama. EW 42 of 2015 to EW 30 of 2017



Source: Data provided by the Panama Ministry of Health to PAHO/WHO<sup>1</sup>

## FIRST AUTOCHTHONOUS VECTOR-BORNE CASES

In epidemiological week (EW) 48 of 2015, the Panama International Health Regulations (IHR) National Focal Point (NFP) reported to PAHO/WHO the detection of the first confirmed case of autochthonous vector-borne transmission of Zika. The first case was reported from Ustupu Island in Alligandi District, Guna Yala Region.

## GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

As of EW 35 of 2017, all 15 health regions in Panama reported confirmed cases of Zika virus. Between EW 47 of 2015 and EW 35 of 2017, the health regions of Guna Yala (439 cases per 100,000 population) and Herrera (142 cases per 100,000) reported the highest cumulative incidence rates of Zika among confirmed cases.<sup>2</sup>

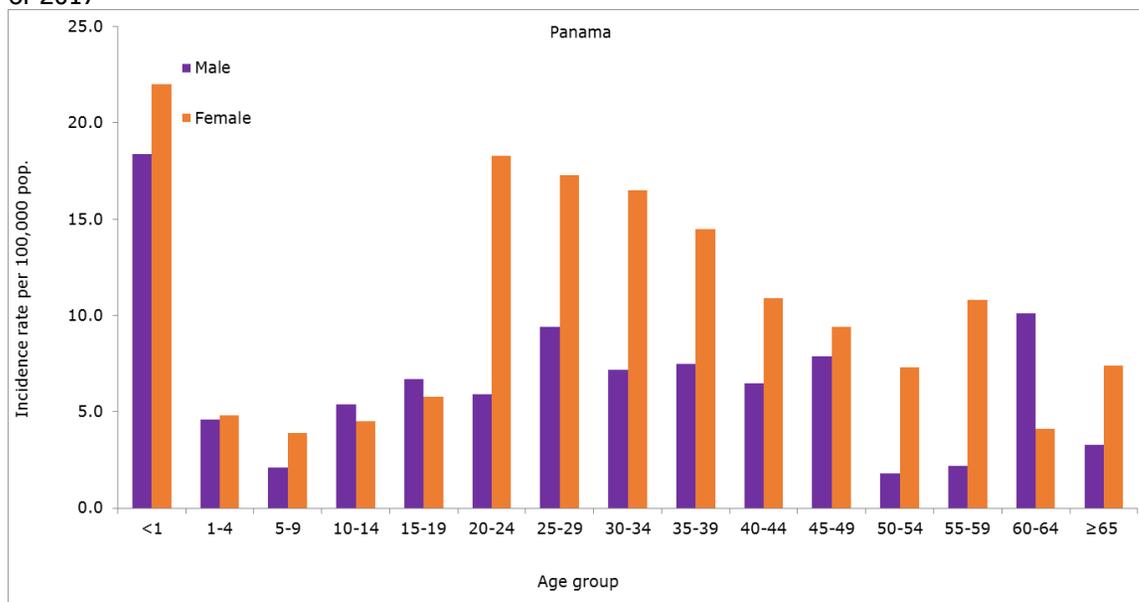
<sup>1</sup> Zika virus data reported to PAHO/WHO by the Panama IHR NFP on 1 August 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Panama Ministry of Health. Epidemiological Bulletin No. 35– Zika. 5 September 2017. Available at: [http://www.minsa.gob.pa/sites/default/files/publicacion-general/boletin\\_zika\\_35.pdf](http://www.minsa.gob.pa/sites/default/files/publicacion-general/boletin_zika_35.pdf)

## TREND

Suspected Zika cases in Panama started increasing in EW 2 of 2016 and reached a peak in EW 1 of 2017, with 244 suspected and confirmed cases reported (**Figure 1**).<sup>1</sup> Cases have been on a decline since the peak until EW 22, when an increasing trend was observed. In the last eight weeks (EW 23 to EW 30), an average of 63 cases per week was reported. There is a preponderance of females among confirmed Zika cases in Panama (**Figure 2**). The highest rate is observed in females aged less than 1 years-old, followed by females of 20-24 years, and females of 25-29 years.<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 2:** Incidence rate of confirmed Zika cases by sex and age group. Panama. EW 1 to EW 33 of 2017



Source: Data published by the Panama Ministry of Health and reproduced by PAHO/WHO<sup>2</sup>

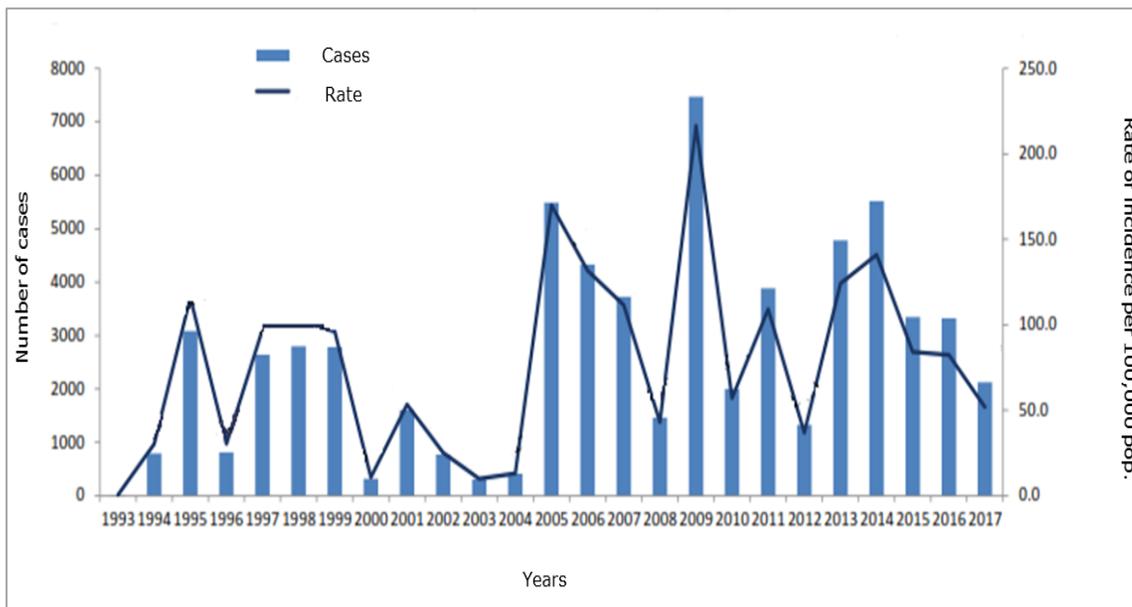
## CIRCULATION OF OTHER ARBOVIRUSES

Between EW 1 to EW 33 of 2017, a total of 2,124 confirmed dengue cases (51 cases per 100,000) were reported at the national level.<sup>3</sup> This figure is approximately 1.8 times the number of cases reported in 2016 for the same period when 1,139 cases (28 cases per 100,000) were reported.<sup>4</sup> The total number of dengue cases reported in 2016 was lower than those reported in the previous three years (**Figure 3**).

<sup>3</sup> Panama Ministry of Health. Epidemiological Bulletin No. 33 – Dengue. 28 August 2017. Available at: [http://www.minsa.gob.pa/sites/default/files/publicacion-general/boletin\\_33\\_denque\\_1.pdf](http://www.minsa.gob.pa/sites/default/files/publicacion-general/boletin_33_denque_1.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Panama Ministry of Health. Epidemiological Bulletin No. 33 – Dengue. 25 August 2016. Available at: [http://www.minsa.gob.pa/sites/default/files/publicacion-general/boletin\\_33\\_denque\\_0.pdf](http://www.minsa.gob.pa/sites/default/files/publicacion-general/boletin_33_denque_0.pdf)

**Figure 3:** Number of suspected dengue cases and incidence rate. Panama. 1993 to 2017. (up to EW 33 of 2017)



Source: Surveillance data published by the Panama Ministry of Health and reproduced by PAHO/WHO<sup>3</sup>

Chikungunya emerged in Panama in 2014. Between EW 1 and 35 of 2017, a total of 25 confirmed cases of chikungunya has been reported.<sup>5</sup> This figure is four times the number of chikungunya cases confirmed in same period in 2016 (n=6).<sup>6</sup> In 2016, a total of 3,545 suspected cases including six confirmed cases were reported up to EW 52.<sup>7</sup>

## ZIKA VIRUS DISEASE IN PREGNANT WOMEN

Since the beginning of the epidemic up to EW 35 of 2017, a total of 212 suspected cases of Zika virus disease, including 86 laboratory-confirmed cases, have been reported in pregnant women by Panama health authorities.<sup>2</sup> Majority of the suspected cases were in their third trimester of gestation, and in the age group 30-34 years. Of the 15 regions reporting cases of Zika virus in pregnant women, Metropolitan Region reported the highest number of cases (suspected and confirmed) accounting for 47% of the total case count.<sup>1</sup>

## ZIKA COMPLICATIONS

### ZIKA-VIRUS-ASSOCIATED GUILLAIN-BARRÉ SYNDROME (GBS)

Between 2015 and EW 30 of 2017, a total of 27 GBS cases have been reported.<sup>1</sup> Of these, three have been laboratory-confirmed for Zika virus infection.<sup>1</sup> One other neurological syndrome case has been laboratory-confirmed for Zika virus infection.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Panama Ministry of Health. Epidemiological Bulletin No. 8 –Chikungunya. 4 September 2017. Available at: [http://www.minsa.gob.pa/sites/default/files/publicacion-general/boletin\\_8\\_chikv\\_2.pdf](http://www.minsa.gob.pa/sites/default/files/publicacion-general/boletin_8_chikv_2.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Panama Ministry of Health. Epidemiological Bulletin No. 8 –Chikungunya. 5 September 2016. Available at: [http://www.minsa.gob.pa/sites/default/files/publicacion-general/boletin\\_8\\_chikv\\_1.pdf](http://www.minsa.gob.pa/sites/default/files/publicacion-general/boletin_8_chikv_1.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Panama Ministry of Health. Epidemiological Bulletin No. 12 –Chikungunya. 15 February 2017. Available at: [http://www.minsa.gob.pa/sites/default/files/publicacion-general/boletin\\_12\\_chikv\\_1.pdf](http://www.minsa.gob.pa/sites/default/files/publicacion-general/boletin_12_chikv_1.pdf)

## **CONGENITAL SYNDROME ASSOCIATED WITH ZIKA VIRUS INFECTION**

As of EW 30 of 2017, seventy-six suspected cases of congenital syndrome associated with Zika virus disease have been reported by Panama health authorities, of which 13 have been laboratory-confirmed for Zika virus infection by RT-PCR.<sup>1</sup>

## **DEATHS AMONG ZIKA CASES**

As of EW 35 of 2017, no deaths among Zika cases have been reported by Panama health authorities to PAHO/WHO.

## **NATIONAL ZIKA SURVEILLANCE GUIDELINES**

No information is available on the national guidelines for Zika surveillance.

## **LABORATORY CAPACITY**

As of EW 47 of 2016, there has been one laboratory performing real-time PCR in Panama and the diagnosis of Zika virus infection is centralized at the Instituto Gorgas.

## **INFORMATION-SHARING**

The Epidemiological Bulletin is published by the Panama Ministry of Health on a weekly basis. Information on Zika virus is also received by PAHO/WHO from the Panama IHR NFP on a weekly basis. At the time of this report, the latest available Zika information shared with PAHO/WHO was from EW 30 of 2017 and at the latest available Zika information published by the Panama Ministry of Health was from EW 35 of 2017.