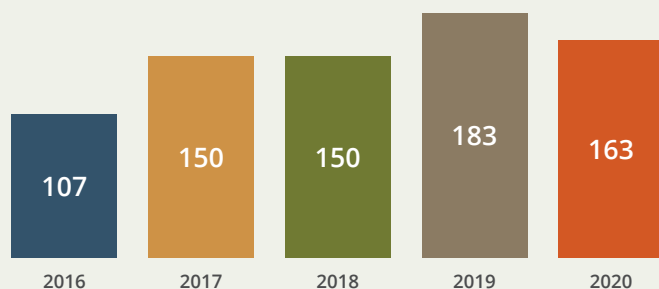




Eurojust casework on Trafficking in Human Beings (THB)

THB cases registered

There was a slight increase in case numbers **in the period 2016-2020**. The number of THB investigations and prosecutions coordinated by Eurojust nevertheless remains low considering the large number of victims and suspects in the EU.



Victims of human trafficking

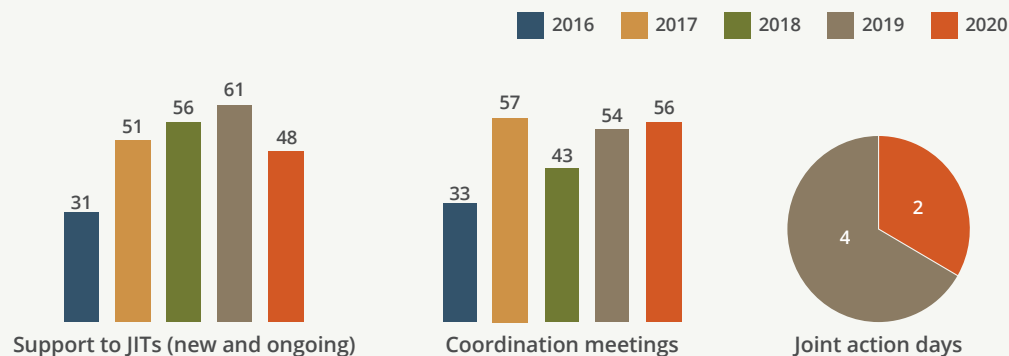
THB cases registered by Eurojust **in the period 2017-2019** show that most victims were trafficked for sexual or labour exploitation. In the 91 cases analysed, the vast majority of victims were adult females. Most cases (84) involved EU citizens from Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Hungary and Lithuania. 8 cases involved third country nationals from Nigeria, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. Eurojust assisted national authorities in locating, identifying, rescuing and protecting these victims, irrespective of where their recruitment, transit and exploitation took place in the EU.



Cross-border THB cases involve difficult and demanding investigations and the need for close cooperation between countries of origin of victims, transit and exploitation. Investigations reveal the prominent role of **organised crime groups (OCGs)** and their movements within the EU. Through early and close coordination of national investigations and prosecutions, Eurojust contributes substantially to dismantling trafficking networks and protecting victims.

Access to judicial cooperation tools

Joint investigation teams (JITs) have proved to be one of the most effective tools in dealing with THB. Through JITs, dynamic and close partnerships are developed and common investigative goals established. They provide the flexibility and speed needed to adjust investigative measures to changing circumstances in trafficking. In addition to assisting and funding JITs, Eurojust organises **coordination meetings**, as well as **coordination centres** that provide real-time assistance during action days.



Other serious crimes linked to THB

THB is a complex crime linked to the establishment of OCGs and often to other forms of serious criminal activity. **During the reporting period 2017-2019**, 396 out of 405 cases involved OCGs and almost half (183) involved one or more other crimes in combination with THB. Targeting these sophisticated OCGs required close coordination by Eurojust.

