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The Council had recognised the importance of remittances even before the adoption of the Joint Valetta Action Plan. In its Conclusions¹ on Migration in EU Development Cooperation, the Council underlined the need to enhance transparency and competition in the remittances market. It also stressed the importance of promoting a widespread use of financial services as well as the necessary reforms of the relevant legislative and regulatory frameworks in partner countries.

In its Conclusions² on a New Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015, the Council emphasised the need to enhance access to financial services, reduce transfer costs and ensure safe channels for remittances. In addition, the Council³ highlighted the contribution of digital technologies in reducing remittance transfer costs in its Conclusions on Mainstreaming digital solutions and technologies in EU development policy.

In its Conclusions⁴ on the European Consensus on Development, the Council went further in advocating investment, trade and innovation in partner countries in order to boost growth and employment opportunities, including through the engagement of diasporas, support for social and education systems and cooperation with private sector partners and others in order to lower the cost of remittances and promote faster, cheaper and safer transfers in both source and recipient countries, thus harnessing their potential for development.

Lastly, in its Conclusions⁵ on Investing in Sustainable development, the Council called on the Commission and the Member States to strengthen efforts to enhance productive use of remittances. The Council also stated that remittances are a key private source of financing for developing countries. They are essential for sustainable development in many partner countries and their development impact should be maximised. The EU and its Member States intend to work with private sector partners and others to lower the cost of migrant remittances to less than 3 % of the amount transferred.

¹ ST 16901/14 - 12 December 2014.

² ST 9241/15 - 26 May 2015.

³ ST 14682/16 - 28 November 2016.

⁴ ST 10108/17 - 7 June 2017.

⁵ ST 8959/18 - 22 May 2018.