



Brussels, 17 December 2020
(OR. en)

14132/20

RECH 527
COWEB 180
EDUC 450
CULT 92

'I' ITEM NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee

Subject: Council approval for the opening of negotiations between the Commission and the Western Balkan partners on a non-binding Joint Declaration on a Western Balkans Agenda on Innovation, Research, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.

- Approval of entering into negotiations
- Decision to use the written procedure

1. On 14 December 2020, the Working Party on Research received information from the Commission on the Commission's intention on behalf of the Union to enter into negotiation on a non-binding Joint Declaration on a Western Balkans Agenda on Innovation, Research, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport¹.
2. It is expected that the Joint Declaration, and the actions that it will set into motion, underpin the implementation of the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans². It is envisaged that the Joint Declaration will stress the shared commitment of the Western Balkans and European partners to jointly progress on a European path in the areas of Innovation, Research, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.

¹ WK 14291/2020
² 11616/20 + ADD1

3. It is understood that the Commission will revert to the Council at the end of the negotiations to seek approval by the Council for signing up to the non-binding Joint Declaration on a Western Balkans Agenda on Innovation, Research, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.
 4. In view of the above, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited:
 - to confirm its approval for the Commission to enter into negotiation on behalf of the Union on a non-binding Joint Declaration on a Western Balkans Agenda on Innovation, Research, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, and
 - to decide, in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article 12(1) of the Council's Rules of Procedure and Article 1 of Council Decision 2020/1659, that the Council uses the written procedure for the approval to enter into negotiations.
-