



**EUROCHAMBRES Affiliated and Correspondent
Members Meeting
TOBB Istanbul
Joseph Borg
Tuesday 6 September 2022**

Dear Friends, first of all I would like to thank Eurochambres for organizing this meeting which is happening during momentous times. Also I would like to thank TOBB and in particular President Rifat, for their hospitality. I would like to salute all our friends over the internet and in this room. I salute Ukraine and tell our friend, the President of the Ukraine Chamber of Commerce that we are always with you.

Obviously I will speak from the perspective of the European islands; Insuleur which I am representing, is the association for the Chambers of the European islands. I myself come from Gozo a small island, off the main island of Malta and I am president of the Gozo Business Chamber.

Let us look at the last few months. Covid-19 hit islands very badly. Islands depend on tourism and for most islands tourism is more than 50 per cent of the economy. So it is natural that islands were hit by Covid more than the mainland.

Now travel has started again and there has been good recovery on islands. We hope that this will continue, as we hope our efforts to diversify our economy by introducing industries related to the green economy and digitalization.

As it is obvious islands depend on accessibility and the war has hit energy costs resulting in higher transportation costs and this is starting to hit islands very badly. This together with all the other problems, mentioned around the table, that are hitting our economies.

To compound this we are seeing that the European green deal will hit aviation in a bad way. We depend on aviation with regards accessibility and we are feeling that high aviation costs will hit islands very badly. We are asking the European Union to revise these rates when it comes to European islands.

We are also taking this opportunity to ask Eurochambres to help us in our efforts to defend businesses on European islands.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be with all of you this morning.