Preface

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The newly created *Italian Economic Journal* carries already an important history on its shoulders. Not only it is the journal of the Italian Economic Association (SIE), founded in 1950, but it is also the result of a merger between the *Rivista Italiana degli Economisti*, founded by SIE, and the *Giornale degli Economisti*, the oldest and most prestigious Italian Economic Journal.

The idea of bringing the *Giornale degli Economisti* under the umbrella of SIE was initially put forth under the SIE Presidency of Luigi Pasinetti (1986–1989). It did not materialize, but SIE, in the meantime, published three volumes, in English, of important articles originally published in Italian (1992, 1993, 1998): with works, among others, by Barone, Pareto, and Pantaleoni published in the *Giornale degli Economisti*, and Sraffa's famous critique of the Marshallian theory of the firm, originally published in 1925 in the *Annali di Economia*. Later, in 1995, *Rivista Italiana degli Economisti* (RIE) was launched, under the editorship of Piero Alessandrini, then Secretary General of SIE and with Giacomo Becattini, then President of SIE, acting as Chairman of the Scientific Committee.

As befits the official academic publication of a national economic association, RIE was open to both theoretical and empirical contributions in all areas of economics, ranging from mainstream to heterodox approaches and with a standard of openness that is now unfortunately uncommon and without sacrificing on analytic rigor and real-world relevance. All articles in the first issue were in Italian; starting with the first issue of 1996, some articles were published in English, and over time the English component

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of the journal expanded. Thus, the decision to publish a journal fully in English and with an established international publisher was the natural point of arrival of a long-run trend. In its 19 years of life, RIE reached full maturity, with a growing readership that appreciated a long stream of high-level articles by distinguished Italian and foreign economists, such as Giacomo Becattini, Augusto Graziani, Franco Modigliani, Luigi Pasinetti, Charles Sabel and Robert Solow, as well as by a crop of bright young economists.

The *Giornale degli Economisti* (GdE), founded in 1875, reflected initially the social inclinations of Italian academicians who were philosophically close to socialism and to the German historical school. This first phase of GdE ceased in 1879: among its contributions it is worth recalling that by Walras (1876) on the use of mathematics in political economy. The second phase of GdE began in 1886. While open to all viewpoints, from 1890 onwards it became virtually the journal of liberal economists. GdE acquired an international reputation, through the contributions of Barone, Benini, De Viti de Marco, Edgeworth, Einaudi, Mosca, Pantaleoni, Pareto, Taussig, von Bortkiewicz, and Walras. In 1910, GdE took the name of *Giornale degli Economisti e Rivista di Statistica*, which identifies its third phase. Prestige and reputation continued to be high thanks to contributions, among others, by Amoroso, Bresciani Turrone, Cantelli, Fanno, Gini, Marget, Michels, Ricci, and Slutsky. The third phase came to an end when Fascist racial laws led Gustavo Del Vecchio and Giorgio Mortara to plan the termination of GdE. Termination, however, was avoided through the auspices of Giovanni Gentile, then vice president of Bocconi University, and Giovanni Demaria. The journal was gifted to Bocconi and a new series started in 1939 under the name of *Giornale degli Economisti e Annali di Economia* (the *Annali di Economia* was the journal of the Bocconi University). This series started in a very impressive way, to the point that Schumpeter wrote to Demaria that he deemed GdE one of “the 3 or 4 first scientific periodicals in the world”. The contents of GdE triggered the intervention of the Fascist authorities who first imposed a change of the chief editor and, later, in 1943, stopped altogether publication. GdE started again after the war, in 1946. Among its contributors in the post-war period we recall Duncan Black, de Finetti, Frisch, Guitton, Machlup, Marchal, Modigliani, de Montbrial, Morgenstern, Perroux, Sylos Labini, Tinbergen, and Tintner. In the last eighteen years, when virtually all articles were published in English, GdE privileged two areas: economic policy issues relevant to Italy and Europe and critical surveys of recent developments in the theoretical and empirical literature.

The long-lived aim to consolidate *Rivista Italiana degli Economisti* and *Giornale degli Economisti* became a concrete possibility three years ago. Its realization involved a rather long and complex process, beginning with the acquisition by SIE of the property of both RIE and GdE, thanks to the generosity of their previous owners: Il Mulino, who had acted as publisher of RIE since its foundation, and Bocconi University. In parallel, the governing body of SIE took the decision to merge the two historical Italian journals into a new entity, the *Italian Economic Journal*. As a corollary, some changes had to be introduced into SIE Statutes. Finally, in 2014 Springer was selected as the new publisher of the journal.

Following the tradition of the heritage journals, the *Italian Economic Journal* will publish articles in all areas of economics, providing a scholarly, international forum

for all methodological approaches and schools of thought. In particular, the journal will aim at encouraging and disseminating high quality research about the Italian and the European economy. The principal objective of the next three years—the statutory term of office for the newly elected governing bodies of the journal—is to make the new journal as attractive as possible, not only to the domestic market, but also to the international community of scholars who do theoretical and applied research in economics.