

EDITORS' PREFACE

This special issue brings together the papers presented at the conference held on November 20-21, 2024 at the Fondazione Luigi Einaudi in Turin, in the presence of the President of the Italian Republic, Sergio Mattarella, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Luigi Einaudi.

The conference was organized into four sessions: 'Economist', 'pro-European Writer and Political Actor', 'Historian and Bibliophile', and 'Opinion Maker and Journalist'. The speakers were leading scholars in the fields of economics, history, and political science and, in particular, experts in the field of Einaudi's thought. In fact, most of the speakers took part in the major editorial project dedicated to the life and work of Luigi Einaudi – the "Edizione Nazionale degli Scritti di Luigi Einaudi" (the *National Edition of Luigi Einaudi's Writings*, based at the Fondazione Luigi Einaudi in Turin), comprising 15 volumes divided into sections that offer a comprehensive overview of Einaudi's extraordinarily rich thought and cover the many topics he addressed: from economics, economic history, and public finance to history, politics, and European issues, not to mention his autobiographical and bibliophilic works, along with his vast correspondence. These works, revisited in the papers presented at the conference, provide an up-to-date critical picture of scholarship on Luigi Einaudi and allow for a deeper understanding of the work and actions of the great Piedmontese in the various facets of his complex profile. Einaudi was in fact not only an economist and public-finance scholar, but also a historian, a theorist of liberalism and European federalism, an opinion maker, a cultural organizer, and a public figure who, between 1945 and 1947, rose to the governorship of the Bank of Italy, to the Constituent Assembly, and to the Ministry of the Budget, before becoming President of the Republic in 1948.

This special issue helps to clearly highlight the life path and intellectual development – remarkably and surprisingly relevant in many respects even today – of one of the foremost figures of twentieth-century Italian and European economics, culture, politics, and institutions, essential for understanding the troubled journey of liberalism and democracy during the 20th century.