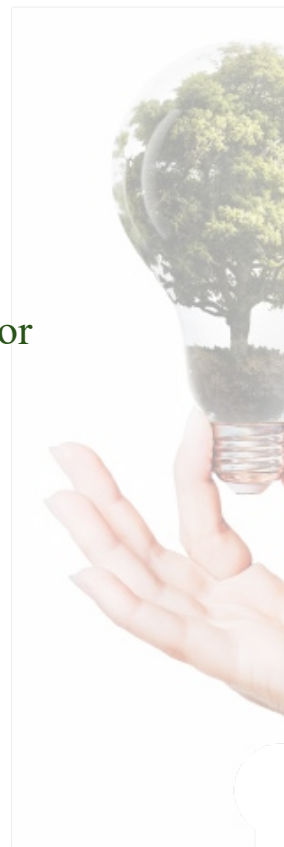


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Preface

ICQIS2025 was the sixth edition of the International Conference on Quality, Innovation and Sustainability, proudly coordinated by the International Scientific, Advisory and Organizing Committees. This year, the conference took place in the charming city of Urbino, Italy — a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its cultural legacy and academic tradition.

Originally launched in northern Portugal, the ICQIS conference series has continued to expand, establishing itself as a vibrant platform for international exchange. In 2025, the event once again offered an opportunity for scholars, researchers, professionals, and practitioners to present cutting-edge contributions and engage in rich discussions on quality, innovation, and sustainability across the domains of engineering, business, and societal transformation.

The 2025 edition brought together one hundred and forty-four authors from fourteen countries, reflecting the global relevance and growing impact of the conference. The diversity of topics discussed — ranging from digital transformation and circular economy to lean management, sustainable tourism, Industry 5.0, human-centric innovation, and inclusive leadership — highlights the interdisciplinary nature of the event and the shared commitment to building more sustainable and resilient systems.

A key highlight of ICQIS2025 was the participation of three outstanding keynote speakers. Professor Rodrigo Lozano, affiliated with TU Dresden, Vienna University of Economics and Business, and the Central University of Technology in South Africa, delivered an insightful presentation on tools, initiatives, and approaches for sustainability in organizations, emphasizing the integration of sustainable practices into organizational strategies.

Professor Maria Francesca Renzi, Full Professor at Roma Tre University and President of the Italian Association of Commodity Science (AISME), offered a forward-looking lecture on the digital transformation and its social impacts in the agri-food sector. Her talk explored emerging trends and the evolving intersection between technological innovation, sustainability, and societal well-being.

Lastly, Professor Jiju Antony, Vice President of Research at the International Academy for Quality, discussed the application of Lean Six Sigma in higher education, addressing challenges, benefits, tools, techniques, and providing examples of successful projects.

The Organizing Committee is deeply grateful to all participants, authors, and reviewers for their invaluable contributions. Every paper presented offered a chance to explore innovative research questions, modelling approaches, case studies, and critical perspectives. We also sincerely thank the members of the International Scientific Committee and Advisory Committee for their dedication and efforts, which helped ensure the quality and relevance of the conference content.

ICQIS2025 was a forum not only for presenting results, but also for nurturing collaboration, strengthening academic and professional networks, and envisioning new paths for sustainable innovation.

We look forward to welcoming all of you again at ICQIS2026.

Chair of ICQIS 2025

Prof. Federica Murmura

Urbino (Italy), June 2025

Diversity and Inclusion in the Banking Sector: Exploring ISO 30415 Adoption in an Italian Financial Institution

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Abstract

The growing interest in sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has made Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) essential for organizations (OECD, 2021), pushing them to address non-inclusive behaviors and discriminatory practices. The banking sector, in particular, has historically faced significant gender disparities, with women underrepresented in leadership and decision-making positions (Birindelli, Palea, 2024). Addressing gender diversity and fostering an inclusive work environment is crucial to creating balanced leadership teams, improving decision-making, and enhancing organizational performance (Birindelli, Iannuzzi, 2022; Paolone et al., 2023).

Diversity and inclusion though often used interchangeably, represent distinct concepts (O'Donovan, 2018). Diversity refers to the visible and invisible traits that distinguish individuals, reflecting societal heterogeneity within organizations (Griffin and Moorhead, 2006). Inclusion, on the other hand, is an approach to diversity that leverages these differences to benefit all employees, ensuring that their perspectives and contributions are valued (O'Donovan, 2018).

A significant advancement in this field is the introduction of ISO 30415, the first international certification for Human Resource Management – Diversity and Inclusion, published in May 2021 by the International Standard Organization (ISO). This certification offers a structured framework for organizations to continuously improve their inclusive practices and diversity. ISO 30415 acknowledges that each company is unique, and managers must define the best approach for their workforce based on the context and corporate mission. Therefore, customized diversity management activities are necessary (O'Donovan, 2018).

Despite the growing interest in D&I, there has been limited research on how financial institutions implement ISO 30415, especially regarding gender diversity (Intonti, 2025). This study aims to address this gap by exploring the adoption of ISO 30415 in an Italian bank—one of the first globally to achieve this certification. Using a qualitative case study approach, the research analyzes adoption drivers, benefits, challenges, and actors involved, contributing to the D&I literature and promoting more inclusive practices.

KEYWORDS: ISO 30415, Diversity and Inclusion, Credit institutions, Italy, Case Study