

## Women in the Lift Industry Sighted



Participants in action: Barbara Ennemoser/TUEV Sued, Maryam Lashkary/Wieland Electric, Christina Kotikosta/Kleemann, Franziska Schwarz/Stadt Wiesbaden, Sandra Eisenbarth/DigiPara (left to right)

Six of nine women out of a total of around 150 participants met on the second day in the coffee break at the European Lift Congress Heilbronn in October 2018 in Villingen-Schwenningen/Germany for the second Women in the Lift Industry in Europe (short: WoLIE) Communal Coffee (short: CoCo). The ladies around the all-female coffee table were representing activities from elevator-related industry and administration as well as from monitoring and consulting from Germany and Greece; another lady sent her virtual support from the UK. The women's management experience ranged from close co-operation and technical leadership of projects to the disciplinary leadership of 11 people on site (including two men) plus five overseas (including one man).

The introducing round at WoLIE CoCo revealed two marketing managers and four female engineers. The engineers almost consistently reported that they were the first and only female engineers in the company. This did not result in

any specific difficulties. But all wondered, why not more women are studying the generally attracting so-called "Applied Sciences". One reason for the women in technology might be the reputation of the engineering profession and technology itself, as disseminated and amplified by the media. Another reason they saw in education: Girls are to wear pink clothes and to play with pink toys; they rarely get to play with colourful Lego bricks, even if there exist already Playmobil figures as suitable more neutral role models today.

Basically, girls and women seem to have a lower self-confidence, so the participants. Women would keep asking themselves sceptically "Can I really do that?". Single-gender lessons i. e. in robotics strengthen the female "backbone" significantly already at an early age, which was proven.

The participants generally agreed that women tend towards perfectionism and seek the deeper meaning of their work. For example, more women work in the fields of architecture, environment and medical technology than in elevator construction. This slows down the change in technology and management.

The substantial conclusion of this meeting was: For today's women basically every career is open. Generally, the fe-

male participants called for more research and dissemination of knowledge on the question of whether and if what proportion of women's career choice and career aspiration is of genetic cause. With a loud laugh, the "scientific" statement by Undine Stricker-Berghoff, the WoLIE initiator, was noted: "On average, the male brain is slightly larger than the female. But - the female brain is better supplied with blood, thus leading to a higher efficiency."

The positive atmosphere in the women's section, which was clearly visible at the bar table in the foyer, attracted a great deal of attention from male participants in the area. Some approached the group in order to inquire on the background of a meeting of female participants or to express their interest in the WoLIE Initiative.

The participants in the WoLIE CoCo were expressly in favour of further meetings of women in the lift industry, preferably across national borders. The exchange of experiences gives the individual woman strength and as a group, woman is better perceived in industry. The next brief WoLIE meeting is planned for the Heilbronn Lift Days in March 2019. The first extended international meeting will take place on Thursday afternoon 17 October 2019 at the interlift fair at Augsburg/Germany. In addition to networking activities, there will also be presentations by sponsors of the WoLIE Initiative. Information about the Initiative and about sponsoring opportunities can be found on the website at [www.wolie.eu](http://www.wolie.eu)

Undine Stricker-Berghoff



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