

News

## Strong in the machine world: Competence knows no gender at Liebherr in Biberach

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**Is mobile construction crane work really just for men? On International Women's Day, Katrin Kremmler and Antonia Michutta show that expertise isn't a matter of gender. Both work with heavy machinery and it's precisely this passion that has now brought them together at Liebherr's site in Biberach (Riß).**

Biberach/Riß (Germany), 8 March 2024 – She gets in, sits down and heads up to a height of around 30 metres at the touch of a button, “The views and the feeling you get up there in the crane cab are amazing,” says Antonia Michutta, an apprentice at crane and transport company Hermann Paule GmbH & Co. KG in Esslingen. She can see across the whole of Biberach as well as the various Liebherr mobile construction cranes (MK). Katrin Kremmler, who stands behind her, can tell her everything she needs to know about the construction machinery on the training site. This is because the 25-year-old is a technical trainer for MKs at Liebherr and is supervising Antonia Michutta's training.

### From mechatronics engineer to trainer

This setup – a woman training a woman – is rare. In the logistics sector and in the metal and electrical industry, around one in five employees is female. That said, the statistics also include administrative professions in which women are more strongly represented. But when it comes to technical jobs, the field quickly thins out.

“I was the only woman in my class when I was training as a mechatronics engineer,” says Katrin Kremmler. She has been with Liebherr-Werk Biberach GmbH (manufacturer of mobile and tower cranes) for ten years. Katrin trained here, completed her technical college studies alongside her job, and spent several years working in MK Final Assembly.

Being alone among men is something that hasn't changed to this day. So far, she's the only woman in her field working as a technical trainer for MKs. Why did she choose this career? “The MK is a fascinating product with extensive technology and I get to meet new people and personalities from week to week,” says Katrin Kremmler, who regularly travels abroad for training purposes, most recently to Finland. Sometimes she gets surprised looks from participants when she introduces herself as a trainer, “It spurs me on and makes me want to prove to men that a woman can do this job just as well.” In most cases, the ice is broken pretty quickly.

### Passion for cranes sparked

Given all this, working with Antonia Michutta, who is training to become a qualified lorry driver at Hermann Paule, was all the more special for her. As her employer recently took delivery of a new MK 88-4.1 and Antonia Michutta missed the original training event because of vocational college, Liebherr and Hermann Paule organised a catch-up opportunity. “I really enjoyed the training. I already know that I want to concentrate on crane work after my apprenticeship,” says the 22-year-old.

Training covers various aspects of crane operation, depending on the course objective. Technical trainers are keen to offer as many practical hands-on activities with the machine as possible. This includes circuit driving with different weights, instruction on the superstructure and how to use the radio remote control, as well as trying out intelligent assistance systems like Micromove. Self-help tips are also provided to resolve any error messages that may occur during operation as quickly as possible. A certificate for successful completion of the training is awarded at the end of the week.

Antonia Michutta has discovered her passion for cranes during her apprenticeship. “I was infected by the enthusiasm my colleagues showed. And the first jobs that I got to experience reinforced that feeling,” says the apprentice. She is already looking forward to her first jobs with the four-axle MK 88-4.1 taxi crane, which is ideal for tasks such as roof renovations and other lifting work in confined areas thanks to its agile design.

## **How Liebherr recruits women for STEM careers**

Liebherr uses a variety of approaches to attract more women to STEM professions (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). The Liebherr training centre in Biberach, for example, takes part in “Girls' Day”, supports the #Empowergirl initiative and has a female trainee presence at trade fairs and events. Female apprentices and trainers also visit schools to talk about industrial apprenticeships.

Katrin Kremmler and Antonia Michutta want to use their story to inspire other women to pursue technical careers and help increase the proportion of women in STEM professions. As they see it, the division into male and female occupations doesn't fit in with the times. “Everyone should be able to do what they enjoy in whatever area they can best realise their potential,” says Antonia Michutta. Katrin Kremmler, who grew up working on cars with her father, agrees, “It was the right decision for me as I've always enjoyed technical tasks and I've now got a job that's perfect for me.”

## About the Liebherr Tower Cranes Division

More than seven decades of experience have made Liebherr a recognised specialist for lifting technology on all types of construction sites. The range of Liebherr Tower Cranes encompasses an extensive selection of high-quality tower cranes that are used worldwide. This includes fast-erecting, top-slewing, luffing jib and special-purpose cranes as well as mobile construction cranes. In addition to these products, Liebherr also offers a wide range of services that complete the company's portfolio: Tower Crane Solutions, the Tower Crane Center and Tower Crane Customer Service.

## About the Liebherr Group

The Liebherr Group is a family-run technology company with a highly diversified product portfolio. The company is one of the world's largest manufacturers of construction machinery. It also offers high-quality, user-oriented products and services in multiple other areas. Today, the group consists of more than 140 companies across all continents. In 2022, it employed more than 50,000 people and achieved combined revenues of over 12.5 billion euros. Liebherr was founded in 1949, in Kirchdorf an der Iller in southern Germany. Ever since then, the company's employees have been committed to satisfying customers with advanced solutions and to helping drive technological progress.

## Images



liebherr-mk-training-biberach-01.jpg

They enjoy working with heavy machinery: Katrin Kremmler (left) and Antonia Michutta during MK training at the Liebherr site in Biberach (Riß).



liebherr-mk-training-biberach-02.jpg

Getting stuck doesn't depend on gender: Katrin Kremmler and Antonia Michutta practise retracting crane supports.



liebherr-mk-training-biberach-03.jpg

Katrin Kremmler has extensive knowledge of mobile construction cranes. She used to assemble the machines, now it's her job to explain the technology behind them.



liebherr-mk-training-biberach-04.jpg

Katrin Kremmler shows Antonia Michutta the many switches and levers in the driver's cab as Antonia Michutta will get to operate the mobile construction crane in future.

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