

# CANDIDATE FOR THE POST OF VICE-CHAIR OF THE DEMOCRACY, SOCIAL COHESION AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES COMMITTEE

(Election 29 June 2017)

## Presentation



<b>Name:</b>	<b>Gerhard Ermischer</b>
<b>Date of Birth:</b>	<b>28/03/1963</b>
<b>Nationality:</b>	<b>Austrian</b>
<b>Working languages:</b>	<b>English, German, Italian</b>
<b>Position in the INGO:</b>	<b>Vice-President</b>
<b>Full title and acronym of the INGO:</b>	<b>CIVILSCAPE – We are the Landscape People</b>
<b>Year participatory status was granted to the INGO:</b>	<b>2009</b>

## Motivation

Born 1963 in Salzburg, I studied History and Archaeology in Austria with terms in the UK and Italy.

Since 1992 I live in Aschaffenburg in Germany, where I founded an association dealing with the regional heritage in 1998. Due to European projects and partnerships this developed into an institute for citizen science with more than 7,000 volunteers working with us on researching, understanding and managing their landscape. This brought me into contact with the Council of Europe through the Landscape Convention in 2001, and ever since I have worked with the CoE in different capacities.

The work with the CoE changed my own attitude, becoming less of a researcher and more of an activist for citizen participation in a field which matters most for many: the development of the place where they live: Coming from heritage management to landscape to democratic participation in a field of social cohesion, cultural identity, well-being. Our key target became empowering people to formulate and express their own ideas, participate in planning processes and development based on knowledge and a positive experience: that their opinion counts and their work makes a difference.

I experienced the reform of the CoE, fought to keep heritage, culture, participation on the agenda and did learn a lot for my daily work. I would like to give back some of these experiences and use them for the positive development of this committee, dealing with the passion I found here: democratic participation.