Name: Boldizsár SZENTGÁLI-TÓTH
Gender: Male
Age: 26.

Country: Hungary

EBU Member: Hungarian Federation of the Blind and Partially Sighted (MVGYOSZ)

Number of words in the original language: 481

Hi Reni,

You may be surprised, as today I am going to write about politics, which is something quite unusual for me, you have not seen that often before. Everything that recently happened to me must be known for you from my previous notes. However, I had an extraordinary experience today, which I must put in writing so that you can read it later when you have grown older. When you have become eligible to vote...

The first time when I was able to take advantage of my right to vote was in the 2009 European Parliamentary Elections. Being a young, enthusiastic and conscious citizen, I entered the polling station alone. In fifteen years when you have become an adult you will be doing probably the same. Looking at a young man with a white cane in his hand that was me in front of them, the members of the vote counting committee were blinking at each other in confusion. After a few seconds of embarrassment, I was told to go into the polling booth with one of them, where he would help me to write the x to the right place to cast my vote. Being in the booth just two of us I told him the name of the party I wanted to vote for. He moved a little further from me, and then he said:

* I refuse to vote for this party.
* There was an unpleasant silence for a couple of seconds. He finally left and called a colleague of his to help me. A lady entered the booth and put the x at the right place as requested by me, hopefully.
* Well, my beloved Reni that is how it happened a few years ago, but at that time you had not yet been born, and I did not even dare to think that you would arrive so soon and change my life.
* Later, we went to vote with my parents, with "Granny and Pa", however we did not face any kind of incidents anymore. We entered the voting booth and cast our votes for that party we all supported, together.
* And now, as we went to vote with your mother Kinga, we saw that everything had changed. We were warmly welcome by smiling polling staff handing over some Braille voting templates. You can imagine it as a cardboard template is laid over the ballot sheet with holes on it to indicate where to tick. I was given also a list with the numerical order of the candidates and the parties to vote for in Braille, in front of each hole there was a Braille number accordingly, indicating which candidate or party is meant by the actual holes. All I had to do was just to select the preferred candidate, identify its number on the template and to tick or write an x at the right hole, and my vote has been registered. After having dropped the ballot sheets into the voting urn no one can identify my way of voting. That means, the election was secret indeed!

Once you have read all that I was writing about, you can see, better to say you will be able to see, how much help a simple solution can be even in our digital world of today. A basic problem has been solved: for the voting rights of Blind persons we have to a fair way of voting fulfilling the expectations for the rules of a democracy within a few years.

Although you will not need it, I ask you still to learn Braille writing; you can benefit a lot from it. And who knows, there might come a time when you can make good use of it...

Anyway, my beloved Reni, the main point about today is that there is a hope. There is always hope …