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Dear Friends,

Group-living animals make collective decisions about where the herd goes in two ways—by voting or by copying each other. Goats opt for the latter, according to a 2021 *Royal Society Open Science* paper featured in [a New York Times piece](#). This strategy improves their chances of survival.

Unlike goats, humans tend to do better when their decision-making is based on consensus, usually determined after a ballot. People in free, democratic societies not only are richer and live longer, but they also tend to be happier, according to the Fraser Institute.

But agreeing isn't enough for a successful democratic society. Democracy requires informed engagement.

Our stories this month tell you why. They also show that being involved isn't as hard as you thought. And, frankly, it's way cooler than the alternative.

Enjoy our selection of stories, and scroll down to find out more about the cute billy goats featured in the header!

Be the first to read the latest stories and discover new opportunities by [subscribing to this newsletter](#).

## Democracy done right



### AUBG President Margee Ensign: Civic Engagement Is Democracy in Action

Feeding 300,000 refugees and snatching young women from the clutches of terrorists weren't part of Dr. Ensign's job description as university president.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



### You Have a Question for Government? Stephan Helps You Get Answers

Governments prefer to keep certain information under wraps. It is Stephan Angelov's job to ensure they are not successful and keep you in the know.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

## Those were the days!



### Yesterday, All My Troubles Seemed Like They Were Here to Stay...

"It was so much better back then." The protagonists of Communism V2.0 repeat the phrase so many times they get their wish: the past returns. Funny, sad, and thought-provoking all at once, this comic book is a collaboration between the Sofia Platform Foundation and Maina Town Media.

[FIND OUT MORE \(in Bulgarian\)](#)

## Just out



### Anti-Corruption Fund Recognizes 2023's Top Journalistic Investigations

Red Line awardees investigated corruption in Bulgaria's burial services industry, worsening air pollution, and the plight of Bulgarians without identity documents.

[WATCH VIDEO](#) (in Bulgarian)



### Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Who's the Most Transparent of Them All

On December 12, Transparency International Bulgaria released the 2023 edition of its Local Integrity Index, highlighting the work of local government.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

## Gift with a Cause



The billy goats featured in the banner photo and these merry snowmen are fashioned out of felt wool by disadvantaged women and single mothers. Find more great gift ideas at [DarPazar.bg](#), the civically engaged citizen's favorite store.

Shopping from DarPazar.bg supports the work of small NGOs helping people in need and guarantees a livelihood for vulnerable individuals.

## Stay in Touch

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Sending warm regards,

Your friends at the America for Bulgaria Foundation

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