



## **The villages and the town of Merichlery are also included in the scope of the project for replacement of heating appliances**

Tuesday, 29 September 2020

"From October the 5th, households from all villages and the town of Merichleri will be able to apply for replacement of heating appliances from solid to alternative fuel, within two months - until November 27, 2020. This is one of the largest energy projects and also one of the most significant social projects that have been made for the residents of Dimitrovgrad", said today the mayor Mr. Ivo Dimov, at a specially organized press conference. The project "Improving the quality of the atmospheric air in the municipality of Dimitrovgrad by replacing solid fuel heating devices with alternative forms of heating" is under contract №BG16M1OP002-5.003-0005, funded by the Operational Program "Environment 2014-2020", procedure BG16M1OP002-5.003, priority axis 5 "Improvement of ambient air quality", co-financed by the Cohesion Fund of the European Union and the state budget of the Republic of Bulgaria. The press conference was also attended by the Deputy Mayor for European Projects Mr. Yasho Minkov, Mr. Borislav Tafrazdzhiski - head of the consortium, which implements the activities of Stage 1 of the Project and Mrs. Mariana Hristova - head of the association, which manages the Project activities.

A total of 1,414 households submitted individual applications for replacement of solid fuel heating appliances with environmentally friendly ones and 5 households submitted applications for collective installations. All of them have been assessed according to the established methodology and approved for replacement of their

heating appliances. The majority of the households in the town of Dimitrovgrad have expressed their desire to replace the old heating devices with air conditioners and to switch to electric heating /62.38%. In second place are the households that have expressed their desire to switch to heating with natural gas /20.37%/ and in third place are those wishing to heat with pellets /17.25%/.

Borislav Tafrazhyski thanked for the joint work of the municipality and reported the good work of the project team. After the explanatory campaign, on-site inspections were carried out at the homes by the company's specialists in order to assess the most optimal device for use. The overall goal of the project is to improve the quality of the atmospheric air in the Municipality of Dimitrovgrad by reducing the emissions of PM10 from domestic heating as one of the main sources of air pollution. The specific objective of the project is to replace solid fuel heating appliances of households with alternative types of heating devices. The implementation period is 59 months from the date of entry into force of the contract. The project is implemented in two stages. During the first stage all preparatory actions for the investment were carried out: conducting an awareness campaign, researching the attitudes of the population using wood and coal for heating, conducting analyzes and preparing a common vision for approach to replacement of solid fuel heating devices, development of a mechanism for ensuring priority targeting of investments in rehabilitated buildings, preparation of a Mechanism reporting revenues from the handover of the replaced heating devices, on-site inspection through site visits and preparation of analyzes, development of medium / marginal prices per unit of product for the various alternative forms of heating, preparation of public procurement documents and preparation of a proposal for the parameters of Stage 2 of the project.

During the second investment stage, based on the results achieved during the first stage, Dimitrovgrad Municipality will conduct procedures for selection of contractors and will carry out the main investment activities for dismantling of used heating devices and for delivery and installation of new heating systems, according to the accepted parameters.

The socio-economic goals of the project include improving the health and quality of life of the residents of Dimitrovgrad Municipality as a result of the better air quality, improving the quality of the environment by reducing the harmful emissions of PM by switching to more environmentally friendly forms of domestic heating.

