

Ashgabat, November 8, 2024 - The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) continues its partnership with the State Statistics Committee of Turkmenistan (TurkmenStat) to enhance the country's capacity to track and analyze foreign trade in services, aligning data collection practices with international standards.



From November 4 to 8, international statistics expert Mr. Alexey Ponomarenko visited Ashgabat to share global best practices and offer strategic recommendations for improving the methods used to monitor foreign trade in services. His visit focused on addressing the complexities of measuring service trade, which often involves intangible cross-border transactions that are challenging to capture through traditional customs data. ***"Service trade often encompasses intangible transactions that don't pass through customs, making them harder to track accurately," explained Mr. Ponomarenko.*** ***"Implementing new methods, like tracking electronic payments, can significantly***

improve data accuracy, particularly for digital and smaller-scale transactions.”

On 7 November 2024, a roundtable discussion was held with representatives from the State Statistics Committee of Turkmenistan, Central Bank of Turkmenistan, and State Customs Service of Turkmenistan. Mr. Ponomarenko introduced the potential of using electronic payment data to provide a more complete picture of service flows, particularly for digital and smaller-scale transactions.

Mr. Ponomarenko’s visit is part of the joint UNDP-TurkmenStat project, [“Support in Improving Statistics of Foreign Trade in Services, as well as in Improving Statistical Information on Passenger and Cargo Transportation.”](#) This initiative supports the Government of Turkmenistan’s ongoing efforts to improve both foreign and domestic trade statistics by strengthening institutional mechanisms, harmonizing national legislation with international standards on trade in services, and enhancing the quality of data on passenger and freight volumes.