

Investment Licenses in Saudi Arabia in Numbers: 9,018 Licenses in One Quarter, Up 252%

A read of Ministry of Investment figures for investment licenses issued in Q2 2026: 9,018 licenses against 2,561 a year earlier, growth of 252% and roughly one hundred licenses a day, with three sectors, construction, trade and manufacturing, carrying about 66% of issuance, and what must be ready in a new business's books from day one.

October 2026

Nine thousand and eighteen investment licenses in three months. That is what the Ministry of Investment reported for the second quarter of 2026, against 2,561 licenses in the same quarter last year: growth of +252%, more than three and a half times in a single year, at roughly one hundred licenses every day. Behind the headline sits a distribution worth reading: just three sectors, construction, wholesale and retail trade, and manufacturing, carried about 66% of issuance, and each of them rose to more than three times its prior level. This report reads the numbers as published, then translates them into what it means to be one of these new businesses: what must already be ready in your books from day one.



Three and a half times in a single year

Investment licenses issued in the Kingdom during the second quarter of 2026 rose to 9,018, against about 2,561 in the same period last year, growth of +252% according to Ministry of Investment data.

The difference is 6,457 additional licenses in one quarter. Dividing issuance by the days of the quarter gives roughly one hundred licenses a day, a new investment door opening every few minutes of the working day.

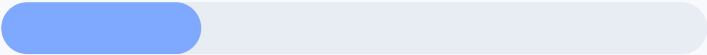
Investment licenses issued in the second quarter of each year

Q2 2026



9,018

Q2 2025



2,561

+252% in a single year

6,457 additional licenses

Source: Ministry of Investment, investment licenses issued in Q2 2026, as published by Okaz and Al-Bilad.

A methodological note: the published figures do not state what drove this jump, and they do not split licenses between domestic and foreign investors. This report therefore reads the number and the distribution as announced, without attributing them to any particular cause.

Three sectors carry two-thirds of issuance

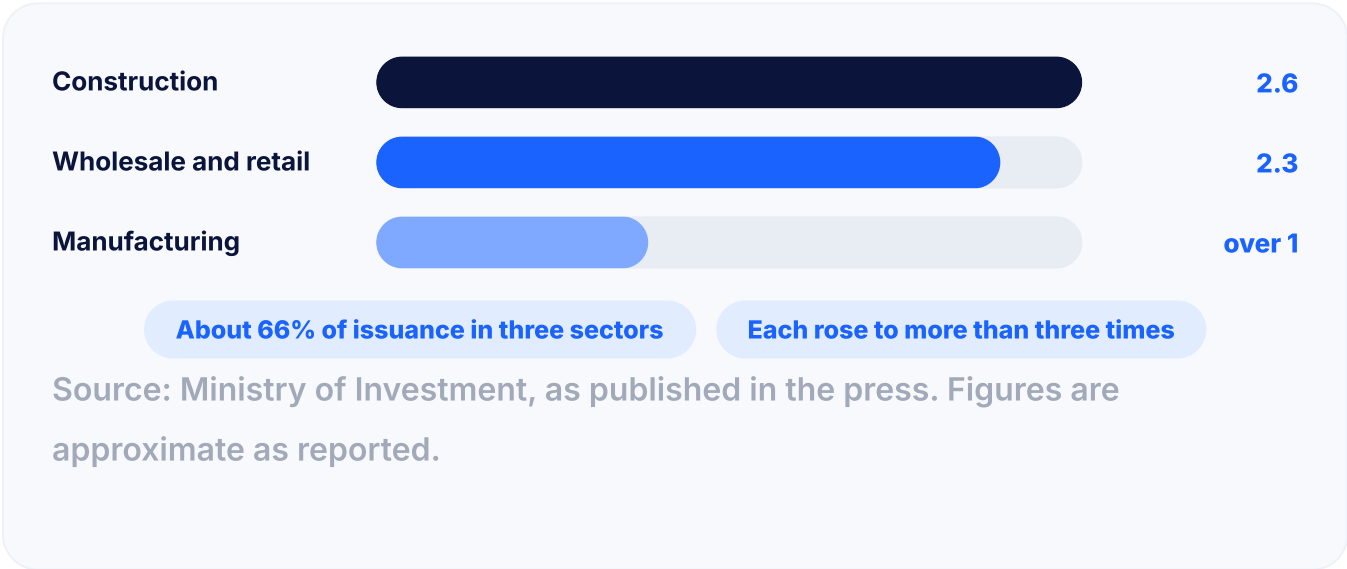
Most licenses concentrated in three activities: construction, wholesale and retail trade, and manufacturing. Together they account for about 66% of licenses issued during the quarter.

According to the sector-level figures published, construction led with about 2.6 thousand licenses, up +218%, followed by wholesale and retail trade with about 2.3 thousand, up +285%, then manufacturing with more than one thousand, up +284%. In other words, issuance in each of the three rose to more than three times its prior level. About a third of issuance (34%) was spread across the rest of the economy.

	Licenses issued (approx.)	Annual growth
Construction	2.6 thousand	+218%
Wholesale and retail trade	2.3 thousand	+285%
Manufacturing	more than 1 thousand	+284%
The three combined	about 66% of the total	three times and above

Source: Ministry of Investment, as published in the press. Sector figures are approximate as reported, and appear in only one publication.

Licenses issued by sector in Q2 2026 (thousands, approximate)



What this means for a business starting today

Every one of these licenses is a business starting out, and its first questions are accounting questions before they are commercial ones. A business that builds its books correctly from day one saves itself a rebuild later, and the order below spells out how.

First, know where you stand against the VAT registration threshold. Registration is mandatory if your taxable supplies exceed SAR 375,000 a year, and voluntary if they exceed SAR 187,500. That question decides whether you will issue tax invoices and file periodic returns, so settle it before the first invoice, not after.

Second, build the chart of accounts before the first entry. The [setup service](#) at Qoyod covers the initial accounting setup and account structure, so you begin with books organised around your actual activity rather than a generic template you adjust later.

Third, issue your first invoice in compliant form. [E-invoicing](#) in Qoyod complies with Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority requirements for Phase 1 and Phase 2, so you do not need to rework your invoicing path as the business grows.

Fourth, know the profit of each activity on its own. If you are in trade, the product cost and profit margin report in [Qoyod](#) shows average cost and margin per item, category and location, calculated from actual purchase invoices. If you are in contracting or services, the Tasks and Projects module tracks time and cost and ties them to the accounting entries, so each project's result stands on its own.

Four accounting readiness points for a business in its first week

Know where you stand against the VAT registration threshold before the first invoice

A chart of accounts organised around your activity before the first entry

Compliant e-invoicing for both phases from the first sale

Profit per item or project on its own the basis for expansion decisions

Prepared by Qoyod based on documented system capabilities and the registration thresholds published by the Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority.

Recommendations

Four practical steps to take from the numbers in this report:

- Estimate your expected annual revenue and compare it with the SAR 187,500 and SAR 375,000 thresholds before you issue your first invoice. ●
- Organise your chart of accounts around your activity: trade, contracting or manufacturing. A generic template costs you more time later. ●
- Separate the business's accounts from the owner's from day one. That separation is the first thing a lender asks for when you need financing, and the [SME financing report](#) covers it in detail. ●
- Record expenses and invoices weekly, not at month end. Fresh books show you the profit picture while you can still act on it. ●

For a wider look at business formation in the Kingdom: [the commercial registers report](#); and for what it costs to run a business: [the operating costs report](#).

9,018 licenses, growth of +252%, and roughly one hundred licenses a day: this is the picture of an economy opening its doors to a new generation of businesses within the path of Saudi Vision 2030. The business that begins with organised books is the one that learns early whether it is profitable, and where.

Sources

- 1 Ministry of Investment via Okaz: investment licenses issued in Q2 2026 rose 252% to 9,018 against about 2,561 in the same period last year. The Ministry's original bulletin was not available when this report was prepared; the figures are relayed from it as published.
- 2 Ministry of Investment via Al-Bilad (20 August 2026): licenses concentrated in wholesale and retail trade, construction and manufacturing at about 66% of the total.
- 3 Sama News Agency: the three sector figures (construction 2.6 thousand, up 218%; wholesale and retail trade 2.3 thousand, up 285%; manufacturing more than one thousand, up 284%).
- 4 Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority: VAT registration thresholds, SAR 375,000 mandatory and SAR 187,500 voluntary, and e-invoicing requirements for Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Start with organised books from day one

Qoyod is an Arabic cloud accounting system whose setup service covers the initial accounting setup and account structure, issues electronic invoices compliant with the Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority, and shows product cost and profit margin per item.

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