

Wholesale and Retail Trade in Saudi Arabia in Numbers: E-Sales Grow 9.8% with Retail in Front

A read of the General Authority for Statistics bulletin for Q2 2026: operating revenue for wholesale and retail trade up 3.2% a year, e-sales up 9.8%, about three times the pace of revenue, employee compensation up 9.0%, and what that means for anyone selling in a shop or online.

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The general operating revenue index for wholesale and retail trade rose +3.2% in the second quarter of 2026 against the same quarter last year, according to the General Authority for Statistics. That figure is the headline, but the larger story sits behind it: e-sales in the sector grew +9.8%, roughly three times the pace of revenue, and compensation of employees rose +9.0%, and +10.8% in retail alone. This report reads the Authority's original bulletin and draws from it a map for anyone selling in a shop or online: where the growth is, and what it asks of your books.

3.2%

annual growth in
the operating
revenue index

5.2%

growth in retail
revenue (excl.
vehicles)

9.8%

growth in e-sales
across the sector

13.4%

growth in retail e-
sales

Sector revenue rises 3.2%, with retail in front

The operating revenue index for retail trade, excluding motor vehicles and motorcycles, rose +5.2% against the same quarter of 2025. Revenue from the sale and repair of vehicles rose +2.7%, and wholesale trade +0.8%.

A methodological note: every comparison in this report is annual, meaning Q2 2026 against Q2 2025, which is the comparison the Authority leads its bulletin with. The figures shown are indices measuring change, not amounts in riyals.

Growth in the operating revenue index by activity (Q2 2026 vs Q2 2025, %)



E-sales grow at about three times the sector's pace

The e-sales index for the sector rose +9.8% against the same quarter last year, compared with +3.2% for operating revenue overall. The online channel is growing at roughly three times the pace of the sector.

Retail leads with +13.4% growth in its e-sales, followed by wholesale at +6.5%, then vehicle sale and repair at +2.4%. Retail e-sales are growing at about two and a half times the pace of retail revenue itself (+13.4% against +5.2%).

Growth in the e-sales index by activity (%)

Wholesale trade

+6.5%

growth in e-sales

Retail trade

+13.4%

the fastest-growing activity
in the online channel

Whole sector

+9.8%

about three times revenue
growth (+3.2%)

Source: General Authority for Statistics, Wholesale and Retail Trade Statistics for Q2 2026. Comparison with the same quarter of 2025.

Workers in the sector: compensation grows 9%

The compensation of employees index for the sector rose +9.0% against the same quarter last year, an indicator of what is paid to those who work in it. Retail recorded +10.8%, wholesale +6.6%, and vehicle sale and repair +5.7%.

That means compensation in retail is growing at about twice the pace of the activity's own revenue (+10.8% against +5.2%). An encouraging reading of the sector's labour market, and at the same time a practical accounting question: what share of your revenue goes to the cost of your people?

	Revenue growth	Compensation growth	E-sales growth
Retail trade	+5.2%	+10.8%	+13.4%
Wholesale trade	+0.8%	+6.6%	+6.5%
Vehicle sale and repair	+2.7%	+5.7%	+2.4%
Whole sector	+3.2%	+9.0%	+9.8%

Source: General Authority for Statistics, Wholesale and Retail Trade Statistics for Q2 2026, against the same quarter of 2025. Retail and wholesale exclude motor vehicles and motorcycles.

What this means for those who sell retail and wholesale

The numbers describe a sector expanding in two channels at once: the shop and the internet. The business that runs both through one organised set of books is the one that knows where it actually earns.

First, make online selling a core part of your books. A channel growing +9.8% should not sit outside the accounting system. Every sale, from the shop or from the internet, needs a compliant invoice, and [e-invoicing](#) in Qoyod complies with Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority requirements for Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Second, measure the cost of your people as a share of revenue. Record salaries as a separate expense line, then compare them with revenue period after period. The income statement in [Qoyod](#) shows expenses by line, and its reports compare up to 13 consecutive periods, so you see whether the ratio is improving or holding.

Third, know the margin of each item. The product cost and profit margin report shows average cost and margin per item, category and location, calculated from actual purchase invoices. In a sector where retail revenue grows faster than wholesale, the highest-margin items decide where your shelf space and advertising budget go.

Fourth, if you sell in a shop, set up the till. The [point-of-sale system](#) lets you define who may grant a discount and their maximum percentage, and it works without an internet connection. But an invoice whose sync has not completed is lost if the user signs out before it finishes, so make the rule: no sign-out before sync. Note that the point-of-sale system is a paid add-on, separate from the accounting plans and not included in the free trial.

Four accounting practices for a sector expanding in two channels

A compliant invoice for every sale, shop or online

a channel without gaps

Cost of people as a share of revenue each period

efficiency measure

Margin per item from actual purchase invoices

item decisions

Discount permissions and sync before sign-out

margin protection

Prepared by Qoyod based on documented system capabilities and General Authority for Statistics figures.

Recommendations

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

- Benchmark your growth against the sector: +5.2% in retail and +3.2% overall. If you are below, the opportunity is there; if you are above, find the source of the gap.
- Track your online sales as an independent indicator, and compare them with the channel's sector growth (+9.8% overall and +13.4% in retail).
- Calculate payroll as a share of revenue every quarter, since retail compensation is growing at about twice the pace of its revenue.
- Review each item's margin before expanding the online channel, because expanding into low-margin items does not raise profit.

For a deeper read of the online channel: [the e-commerce report](#); for digital payment activity: [the digital payments report](#); and for what it costs to run a business: [the operating costs report](#).

Revenue up +3.2%, e-sales up +9.8%, and employee compensation up +9.0%: these are the numbers of a sector expanding in the shop and online together within the path of Saudi Vision 2030. The business that reads its growth at the level of the item and the channel is the one that takes its share of it.

Sources

- 1 General Authority for Statistics: Wholesale and Retail Trade Statistics for Q2 2026 (the original bulletin, primary source for every operating revenue, compensation of employees and e-sales figure in this report).
- 2 Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority: e-invoicing requirements for Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Run the shop and the internet from one set of books

Qoyod is an Arabic cloud accounting system that issues electronic invoices compliant with the Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority, shows product cost and profit margin per item, and compares up to 13 consecutive periods.

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