



الهيئة العامة للإحصاء
General Authority for Statistics

Wholesale and Retail Trade Statistics Methodology





Introduction:

Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey is a quarterly based survey which includes a selection of economic data and statistics that can be used to measure the performance of Wholesale and Retail Trade sector as well as evaluating the growth of the sector, also to identify its strengths and weakness points. Wholesale and Retail Trade is considered one of the essential activities that contribute to the domestic product and labor force, exactly like the retail activity which links producers with consumers. For this reason, GASTAT conducts Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey on an annual basis since 2016; however, the survey was changed to be on a quarterly basis in 2018.

Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey is a periodical study that focuses on the characteristics and components of the establishments working on vehicles selling and maintenance in addition to wholesale and retail trade (based on ISIC4 of Wholesale and Retail Trade activities). Wholesale and Retail Trade helps in providing indicators on the number of workers by sex, nationality, paid compensations, operating expenses, as well as operating revenues (sales) including internet sales.

In conclusion, GASTAT would like to express its deep thanks to all those who participated in this survey, particularly the establishments that work in the Wholesale and Retail Trade sector for their cooperation in providing GASTAT with required statistical data. GASTAT hopes that all planners and researchers of this field would benefit from the information mentioned in this report. Therefore, please provide us with any comments that might help in improving this report in the future via info@stats.gov.sa





Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey's Data Sources:

Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey's data rely on the field surveys of establishments (Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey) which is conducted on a quarterly basis by GASTAT. It is part of (the economic statistics); information is collected by visiting a sample of the economic establishments that represent all administrative regions of Saudi Arabia, also by completing an electronic questionnaire that includes a number of questions, and through that a collection of estimates and indicators related to Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey are provided.

1. Objectives:

- Providing updated statistical data to help decision makers reduce unemployment and increase employment in the private sector in the Wholesale and Retail Trade activity.
- Knowing the volume of Wholesale and Retail Trade activity (wholesale, retail, vehicles maintenance and selling).
- Measuring the extent of contribution of Wholesale and Retail Trade activity to domestic product
- Providing statistics on activities of wholesale, retail, vehicles maintenance and selling to prepare short term indicators that help in recognizing the growth rates of Wholesale and Retail Trade activity.
- Identifying the size of change in the number of workers as well as expenses, compensations and revenues (sales).

2. Terminologies and Concepts of Wholesale and Retail Trade Statistics:

Wholesale and Retail Trade:

It is a quarterly based survey that includes wholesale and retail activities. It is concerned with commercial establishments engaged in the sale of any type of goods whether wholesale or retail without any conversion of the goods, and also includes the repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles.

Establishment:

Is an economic unit of business with a legal entity that has a fixed position in which a certain economic activity is carried out, owned by a person, a group of persons, a company, a semi-governmental sector or an enterprise, it is the smallest economic unit that can have data on workers and their compensation, as well as expenditure, revenues and capital formation.

Economic Activity:

What is performed or provided by the institution, work or services to achieve a return and sometimes institutions do not achieve a return as in the case of charities that rely on donations.

Workers:

All individuals (Saudis and non-Saudis) who are already working whether paid or unpaid work, and the owners of the institutions or their families or their employees, whether they work full time or part thereof, whether they are permanent or temporary male or female. Regardless of whether their wages are paid on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, including partners and members of joint stock companies, heads of directors and members of the boards of directors, as well as employees with paid leave.

Compensations of employees:

All payable amounts that should be paid periodically by the institution to its employees during the year including wages and salaries for regular working hours and fixed allowances, as well as all types of benefits and allowances such as housing and social insurance.





Operating expenditures:

All the institutions' expenses as a result of its economic activity, whether it was purchased in the same year or from purchases made in previous years.

Operating revenues (Sales):

The sales of the goods that are purchased for the purpose of selling them in the same condition, from which purchases were made for these goods, whether the sales were in the main activity (wholesale or retail), or we're in for the secondary activity (wholesale or retail), Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey 2017 8 and it also includes cash revenues earned as a result of the maintenance and repair of motor vehicles or other minor activities performed by the establishments.

Alteration in assets and liabilities:

Identifying the carrying value of (the assets) and changes occurred as purchased additions.

Online sales:

All the establishment's online sales, whether the sale was directly from the establishment or through a broker.

Indicators:

Key indicators of Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey are as follows:

Indicator	Description of indicator
Number of Saudi male employees	Total number of Saudi male employees in the target quarter
Number of non-Saudi male employees	Total number of non-Saudi male employees in the target quarter
Number of Saudi female employees	Total number of Saudi female employees in the target quarter
Number of non-Saudi female employees	Total number of non-Saudi female employees in the target quarter
Compensations of employees	Total financial dues paid to the employee of salaries, benefits, etc. in the target quarter
Average compensations	Total compensation of employees / total number of employees
Operating expenses	All the institutions' expenses as a result of its economic activity in the target quarter
Operating revenues	All the achieved revenues as a result of its main activity or other secondary activities in the target quarter
Productivity rate	Total operating revenues to total number of employees





4. Coverage:

4.1. Spatial coverage:

1. The Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey covers the thirteen administrative regions in Saudi Arabia: Riyadh, Makkah, Madinah, Qassim, Eastern Region, Asir, Tabuk, Hail, Northern Borders, Jazan, Najran, Al-Baha, and Al-Jouf). Cities were given more importance as they comprise about 84% out of total establishments, and employ approximately 91% out of total workers in Saudi Arabia. This is done by visiting a sample of establishments in each region selected scientifically as a representative sample of the whole region's economic establishments.

4.2. Temporal coverage:

It is carried out during the specific temporal period set out to visit establishments included in the survey and to complete the survey's questionnaire. The data of the survey are based on the previous quarter of its implementation stage.

5. Used Statistical Classifications:

Bulletin's data are based on (ISIC REV.4).

6. Sample Selection:

The sample of the survey was chosen by selecting (12051) establishments, as a representative sample of the survey's community distributed by administrative regions at the level of Saudi Arabia.

Sample Units Used in Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey:

Primary sample units are enumeration areas that were taken in the first stage of the sample design. On the other hand, (establishments) are the secondary and final sample units at the same time. They were chosen in the second stage of the sample design; each secondary sample unit is considered part of the primary sample unit.

7. Data Collection Tools:

Questionnaire of field data collection:

The survey's questionnaire was designed by GASTAT's experts of Wholesale and Retail Trade surveys. International norms and recommendations, in addition to the feedback of Wholesale and Retail Trade specialists as well as relevant entities were considered during the design stage. However, questions included in the questionnaire were prepared in a specific scientific manner to unify the researcher's way of asking questions.





The questionnaire was divided into 15 sections by subject to increase its efficiency in achieving technical standards of the field work stage.		
Economic activity	General data	Average number of employees during the year Employment qualifications and competencies
Employees' dues (employees' compensation payable).	Establishment's suitability for e-trade	Commodity and service requirements used during the year
Transfer expenses	Purchases and sales (revenues)	The most important traded commodities (bestselling) during the year
Online sales during the year	Transfer revenues	Paid capital and equity participation
Changes in assets and liabilities	Assets and liabilities by sectors	Government service assessments

To read and download the full version of the questionnaire, please visit the official website of GASTAT https://www.stats.gov.sa/sites/default/files/internal_trade_activity_survey_2016_ar1.pdf



Once the survey's questionnaire is approved, it is converted into an electronic version that can be addressed through a developed system of data collection using tablet devices, to be able to:

1. Review working area of field researcher (sample survey).
2. Access the sample (establishment) using the map available on the tablet.
3. Complete data in a high-quality manner using data auditing rules (to detect errors and illogical inputs automatically as soon as the data are completed).
4. Carry out communications between supervisory groups by sending and receiving notes with the field researcher.



8. Data Collection Method:

Data Collection Method Used in Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey:

- Candidates (field researchers) are selected to collect data of (Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey) according to criteria related to the nature of the work.
- All the candidates, such as (GASTAT's staff, or employees of other government entities) are trained through special training programs.
- Direct communication method is used in order to fill out the survey's questionnaire and collect the required data. Concerned field researchers visited the establishments included within the survey's sample using the coordinates on the tablet and guided maps; they introduced themselves and showed the official documents to prove their identities. They also explained the purpose of the visit, provided an overview about the survey and its objectives, and completed the establishment's data using the electronic questionnaire.
The e-questionnaire was completed by face to face interview either with the owner of the establishment or any other official employees.
- **Tablets are used by field researchers** to complete the survey's questionnaire based on specified time reference according to the rules of navigating between sections and questions of the questionnaire.
- **"Synchronization" feature available on the tablets is used by field researchers in of Saudi Arabia.** Completed data of the establishments will be directly uploaded to the database linked at GASTAT's head office to be stored, reviewed, and processed.
- **Electronic (audit rules) are implanted** to ensure consistency and accuracy of the questionnaire's data of Wholesale and Retail Trade survey. They are (electronic rules that **different working regions** detect the discrepancy of answers). They are built by linking the logical relationship between the answers of the survey and its variables, so that the field researcher can directly detect any error when completing the questionnaire data. These programmable rules do not allow errors to be passed if there is discrepancy between answers and information in the questionnaire.
- **Collected data are validated** by reviewing them through the researcher himself, the responsible inspector, and the supervisor of the survey in the supervision area. All the working areas are monitored and reviewed by **Data Quality Room** at GASTAT's head office. The Room controls and supervises the performance of all operating categories in the field in accordance with the time of data collection from day one until the last day.
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9. Results' Preparations and Revision:

After reviewing the collected data of Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey, calculations were made and results were extracted to upload and store the outputs on the database. Final revision was done by business statistics specialists using the latest technologies and software which were designed for revision and auditing purposes.





10. Dissemination of Data:

First: Preparing the Results for Publishing:

During this stage, GASTAT downloaded the results from the database of Wholesale and Retail Trade Surveys. Then, publishing tables and charts of data and indicators, metadata, and methodology were all prepared and processed to be published in both languages English and Arabic.

Second: Preparing Media Kit and Announcing the Date of the Release:

The publication date of the bulletin is already set up by GASTAT on its official website at the beginning of the Calendar Year. During this period, the media kits are prepared by the Authority to announce the date of releasing the bulletin through media, in addition to its various platforms in social networking sites. The bulletin will be published firstly on GASTAT's official website in different formats, such as Excel format to be easily reached for all clients and those who are interested in Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey in general. It will be uploaded on the website's statistics library as well.

Third: Communicating with clients to provide them with the bulletin:

GASTAT believes in the importance of communicating with the clients, therefore, once the report of Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey is released, it immediately communicates with the clients and provides them with the bulletin's results. It receives questions and inquiries of clients about the bulletin and its results through the following channels:

- GASTAT's official website www.stats.gov.sa
- GASTAT's official e-mail info@stats.gov.sa
- Client support's e-mail



11. Quality Control Measurements:

The Wholesale and Retail Trade survey is subject to many technical quality procedures to ensure the quality of the survey's data, which are:

1. Using assessments of previous surveys to monitor strengths and weaknesses in the implementation and to improve statistical data collection procedures.
2. Training and testing considered researchers to ensure that they can obtain data in an appropriate manner consistent with the objectives of the survey.
3. Testing the electronic means used in data collection stage to ensure the safety and protection of data at all the stages of the survey implementation.
4. Reducing the burden of the respondent by using appropriate statistical methods.
5. Comparing the survey's results with the historical figures to ensure their accuracy and to identify the similarities between such figures and Wholesale and Retail Trade sector in Saudi Arabia.
6. Publishing the results according to the pre-defined publication dates.

In addition to a number of procedures carried out by the Data Quality Room at GASTAT during the process of collecting field data.



Data Quality Room:

An operations room that synchronously works with the field works of surveys. It is equipped with electronic monitoring tools and tracking screens used by observers and quality specialists to review the consistency of data and to detect errors and extreme values during the data collection process in the field. This is done by immediately following up what is being filled out by the field researcher. However, this Room is responsible for checking the researchers' commitment to the survey's instructions during the visit, and the correctness and logicity of the data. It also ensures implementation of the visitation plan of households or establishments, and reviews some important indicators of the survey to ensure the data accuracy. The main tasks of the Data Quality Room are:

Reviewing the collected data and sending notes to the field operating teams of different levels through an automated desktop system that is linked with the tablets of the researchers, so they can access the feedback quickly at their working locations.

Making phone calls with the establishments in order to ask some questions included in the questionnaire to check the accuracy of data completed by the researcher, and his commitment to the instructions during the visit. Also, to obtain the missing data that have not been received yet, and to thank the owners of the establishments for their cooperation.

Answering field inquiries received from field researchers or owners of the establishments.

Checking the questionnaire completion location by matching its coordinates with the registered ones in the sample file.

12. Beneficiaries and Benefits:

All related government sectors in Saudi Arabia can benefit from this survey, such as: Ministry of Economy and Planning, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Council of Saudi Chambers, Small & Medium Enterprises General Authority, Job Creation Commission, and Ministry of Labor and Social Development. Other beneficiaries are: international and regional organization, academic researchers as well as investors. In fact, data and indicators of Wholesale and Retail Trade are one of the significant statistical products that support decision making in this field. The survey's indicators help to identify the size of the Wholesale and Retail Trade workers and to measure the role of this activity in the economic development process. Moreover, to make local, regional, and international comparisons and to conduct studies and analyzes.

To view the full version of Wholesale and Retail Trade Survey's Methodology, please visit the official website of GASTAT

<https://www.stats.gov.sa/ar/921>



