

Packaged to prosperity: MENA's retail sector set for 21% surge by 2026

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In a landscape of rapid change and evolving consumer habits, the MENA region stands at the forefront of retail transformation.



[The Future of Retail MENA](#) study, spanning five key countries including the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and Iraq, offers crucial insights into this evolving landscape.

With a meticulous approach that included over 2000 respondents aged 18 and above, surveyed over three weeks in December 2023, this research provides a deep understanding of the region's diverse consumer dynamics. Led by YouGov and supplemented by secondary sources, the study equips businesses with invaluable insights to navigate the shifting retail terrain effectively.

As the MENA region experiences this period of significant change, notable growth is evident, particularly in the packaged food sector. With the region already accounting for a notable share of global packaged food consumption, projections suggest a remarkable 21% increase by 2026. This surge in demand highlights the region's promising market landscape and underscores the importance for businesses to remain agile and responsive to emerging trends.

A few key takeaways from the report:

- Groceries take the second highest share of income.
- Cautious consumers adapting fast and demand for new solutions.
- How are UAE consumers adjusting their habits in the next six months?
- Health and technology resilient to consumer cutbacks
- The hybrid era takes a stronger foothold in retail channels.
- Lower hassle and better selection are key drivers to online shopping.
- Physical interaction and added delivery cost add to the appeal of instore shopping.
- WOM (word of mouth) remains to be the strongest source of influence.
- Consumers expect innovation and cheaper alternatives from brands.

Key trends explored:

- Commerce shaping Ramadan habits.
- ESG (environmental, social and governance) consciousness.
- The acceleration of retail media in the middle east.
- Artificial intelligence.
- Gen alpha independence.

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