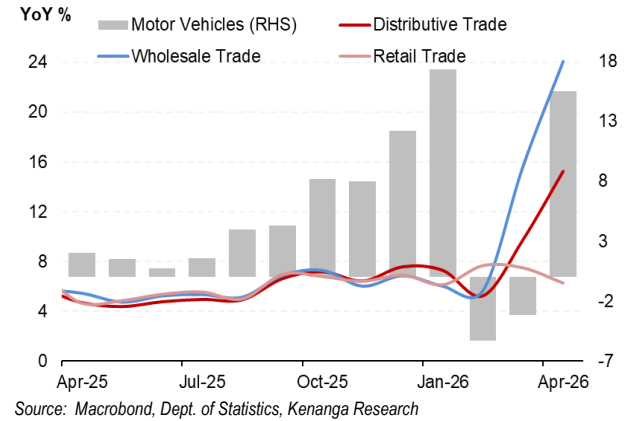


# Malaysia Distributive Trade (Apr-26)

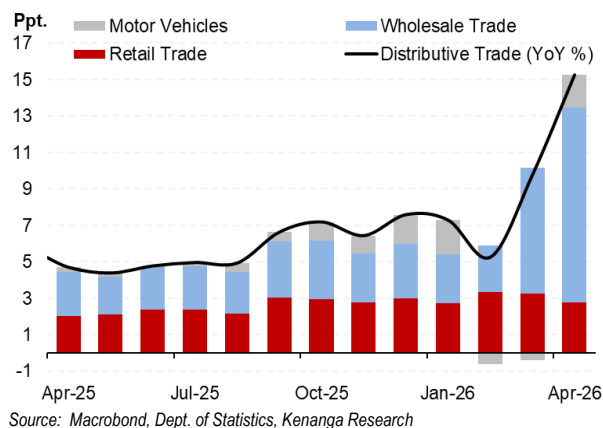
Sales boom to 43-month high masks a brewing 2H26 hangover

- Distributive trade sales surged to 15.3% YoY in April (Mar: 9.8%), the fastest pace in 43 months, driven by wholesale stockpiling, a rebound in motor vehicles, and a low base effect**
  - MoM (3.5%; Mar: 8.1%): Momentum slowed but remained well above 2025 MoM average of 0.6%.
  - Sales value (RM174.9b; Mar: RM169.0b): Rose to a new record high.
- Wholesale trade and motor vehicles drove growth, offsetting softer retail trade**
  - Motor vehicles (15.5%; Mar: -3.1%): Rebounded sharply to a three-month high, supported by a sharp rebound in motor vehicle sales (18.1%; Mar: -12.5%), in line with higher unit car sales of 72.1k units versus 61.8k a year ago. Strong sale, maintenance and repair (38.7%; Mar: 0.6%) also lifted growth. Nevertheless, MoM growth eased slightly (9.2%; Mar: 11.6%) but remained firmly positive.
  - Wholesale trade (24.1%; Mar: 15.7%): Surged to a five-year high on broad-based expansion across sub-sectors, primarily led by a second month of sharp growth in other specialised (52.0%; Mar: 32.0%) its strongest since May 2021 (70.5%), on higher prices of petroleum products, specifically petrol, diesel and lubricants. However, MoM growth slowed (6.6%; Mar: 12.7%) but remained relatively firm versus historical trend.
  - Retail trade (6.3%; Mar: 7.5%): Moderated slightly, due to softer growth in non-specialised stores (6.1%; Mar: 8.1%), though partly offset by higher sales in automotive fuel in specialised stores (12.5%; Mar: 10.6%). MoM growth contracted (-1.5%; Mar: 2.8%) after a strong March rebound.
- Mixed regional retail sales performance in April**
  - SG (5.4%; Mar: 4.6%): Expanded in April to SGD4.3b supported by improved consumer sentiment.
  - HK (8.6%; Mar: 12.8%): Slowed to a three-month low, weighed down by weaker department store and fuel sales.
- We maintain our 2026 distributive trade growth forecast at 6.1% (2025: 5.6%) despite April's upside surprise**
  - Outlook: Year-to-date growth accelerated to 9.4% (Jan-Mar: 7.5%), driven by wholesale stockpiling, higher petroleum-related prices, a recovery in motor vehicles sales, and a low base effect. This points to front-loaded demand amid concerns over rising cost pressures and supply uncertainties. However, softer retail performance may signal that underlying consumer momentum is beginning to normalise after earlier festive-driven strength. Elevated energy prices, persistent geopolitical tensions, and prolonged supply chain disruptions could weigh on consumption and business activity in 2H26. That said, current strength is likely temporary and may be unsustainable in the coming months.
  - GDP Forecast: Monthly indicators, including stronger distributive trade performance and better-than-expected industrial production growth in April, suggest domestic growth remains resilient entering 2Q26. The rebound in motor vehicles and wholesale activity points to some upside support to near-term growth, particularly within services-related sectors. Therefore, we maintain our view that growth momentum will strengthen in 2Q26 before slowing in 2H26 if geopolitical tensions persist and continue to disrupt supply chains. Accordingly, we maintain our 2026 GDP growth forecast at 4.5% (2025: 5.2%), reflecting a cautiously optimistic outlook on 2H26.

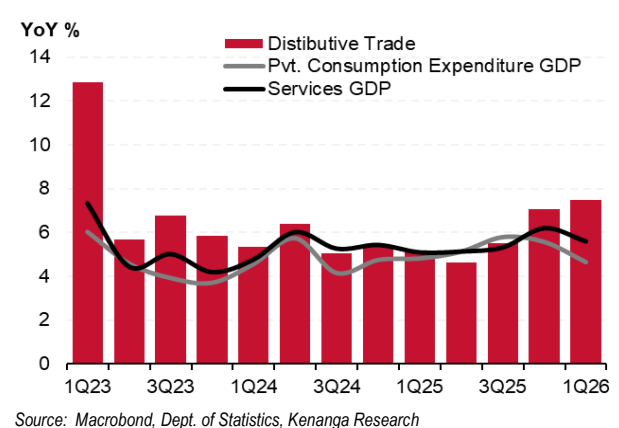
Graph 1: Sales Value Growth



Graph 2: Contribution to Overall Sales Value



Graph 3: Pvt. Consumption, Services & Distributive Trade



15 June 2026

**Table 1: Distributive Trade Sales by Sub-sector (YoY %)**

	% Share*	2024	2025	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26
<b>Distributive Trade</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>15.3</b>
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	<b>44.4</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>24.1</b>
Other Specialised	16.3	2.6	5.1	5.5	4.3	3.7	32.0	52.0	52.0
Household Goods	9.4	5.3	8.5	9.2	9.4	9.6	7.9	8.2	8.2
Food, Beverages and Tobacco	9.0	6.4	6.7	7.1	5.8	5.7	5.4	6.9	6.9
Agricultural Raw Materials and Live Animals	4.1	7.2	3.0	4.6	6.4	4.7	5.7	11.7	11.7
Machinery, Equipment and Supplies	3.6	5.4	6.4	10.8	5.7	5.0	6.6	5.8	5.8
Non-specialised	1.3	6.3	5.5	5.2	5.6	7.6	2.9	6.5	6.5
Fee or Contract Basis	0.8	4.1	4.1	4.2	5.3	5.7	4.3	12.5	12.5
<b>Retail Trade</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>6.3</b>
Non-specialised Stores	16.9	6.9	8.7	9.3	7.9	10.4	8.1	6.1	6.1
Other Goods in Specialised Stores	9.1	8.3	5.1	5.6	5.4	7.4	8.2	6.8	6.8
Other Household Equipment in Specialised Stores	4.9	4.2	3.0	3.1	3.3	4.3	4.1	3.5	3.5
Automotive Fuel in Specialised Stores	4.0	5.5	6.7	7.4	7.0	6.2	10.6	12.5	12.5
Information and Communication Equipment in Specialised Stores	3.4	0.5	4.9	5.9	3.9	4.1	5.9	3.7	3.7
Food, Beverages and Tobacco in Specialised Stores	2.8	7.5	6.3	6.5	5.6	7.7	7.9	5.8	5.8
Cultural and Recreation Goods in Specialised Stores	1.8	4.2	4.1	3.9	4.2	3.0	2.7	3.8	3.8
Not in Stores, Stalls or Markets	0.5	6.4	7.2	9.1	9.0	8.2	8.5	8.8	8.8
Stalls and Markets	0.1	5.4	5.3	5.9	6.2	8.9	9.3	6.4	6.4
<b>Motor Vehicles</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>-5.3</b>	<b>-3.1</b>	<b>15.5</b>
Sales of Motor Vehicles	6.2	3.3	8.9	15.7	25.9	-17.1	-12.5	18.1	18.1
Parts and Accessories	3.4	10.7	5.9	6.6	6.2	6.6	7.6	9.2	9.2
Maintenance and Repair	1.8	10.6	8.7	9.7	9.3	9.5	9.8	9.9	9.9
Sale, Maintenance and Repair of Motorcycles Related	0.8	7.0	7.5	10.9	32.7	0.7	0.6	38.7	38.7

Source: Macrobond, Dept. of Statistics, Kenanga Research

\*Average 2025

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