



## Press Release

### 12<sup>th</sup> Annual ASDA'A BCW Arab Youth Survey

## **Young Arabs say getting quality mental healthcare is difficult**

- *Nearly two-in-five (38 per cent) of Arab youth say they know someone suffering from mental health issues such as anxiety or depression, up from 31 per cent in 2019*
- *Findings from the survey underline the need to strengthen access to quality mental healthcare, coinciding with World Mental Health Day on October 10*

**Dubai, UAE; October 9, 2020:** With World Mental Health Day being observed on October 10, findings from the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual ASDA'A BCW Arab Youth Survey highlight the concerns of young Arabs on the lack of access to quality mental healthcare in the region, and the need for governments to invest in education and awareness campaigns and make quality mental health care more affordable.

According to this year's findings, nearly two-in-five (38 per cent) of young Arabs say they know someone mental health issues, compared to 31 per cent of Arab youth surveyed in 2019.

A majority (56 per cent) of Arab youth also say it is difficult to get quality medical care for mental health issues in their country. Young Palestinians (85 per cent), Yemenis (80 per cent), and Syrians (77 per cent) are most likely to say that quality mental health care is difficult to access. Further, nearly half (48 per cent) of Arab youth say seeking medical care for mental health issues is viewed negatively by most people in their country. With the social stigma associated with seeking mental health care being highest in Morocco (76 per cent), Lebanon (72 per cent) and Libya (70 per cent).

The 2020 [ASDA'A BCW Arab Youth Survey](#) includes 4,000 interviews with young Arab nationals aged 18 to 24 from 17 Arab states in MENA with a 50:50 male female split, and was completed in two parts: The first Main Survey was conducted between January 19 and March 3, 2020, before the COVID-19 pandemic fully impacted the region, and the second, COVID-19 Pulse Survey, between August 18 and 26, 2020. The questions on mental health were asked as part of the main survey.

Sunil John, President – Middle East of BCW and Founder of [ASDA'A BCW](#), said: "Last year, for the first time our survey shed light on the topic of mental health, an issue that had not been widely discussed in the region. With the World Economic Forum highlighting that the economic cost associated with mental illness is the largest of any health issue and set to reach US\$ 6 trillion per year by 2030 globally, timely access to quality mental healthcare is of critical importance. Yet, as our survey shows this year, the region does not appear to have made much progress in addressing this issue.



With 65 percent of the Arab population under the age of 30, the survey presents evidence-based insights into the attitudes of Arab youth, providing public and private sector organisations with data and analysis to inform their decision-making and policy creation. Download for free, the full findings and expert insight and commentary on this year's ASDA'A BCW Arab Youth Survey at [arabyouthsurvey.com](http://arabyouthsurvey.com)

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### **Note to Editors:**

#### **About the ASDA'A BCW Arab Youth Survey**

Now in its 12th year, the annual ASDA'A BCW Arab Youth Survey is one of the most important pieces of research produced in the Middle East and offers unique insight into the attitudes and aspirations of the region's biggest demographic. With 65 percent of the Arab population under the age of 30, the survey presents evidence-based insights into the attitudes of Arab youth, providing public and private sector organisations with data and analysis to inform their decision-making and policy creation.

The survey is the largest of its kind of the region's largest demographic, its youth. This year, the Survey, covering 4,000 young Arabs aged 18 to 24, was conducted in two parts: The first Main Survey, before the coronavirus outbreak, and the second COVID-19 Pulse Survey, following the crisis.

The Main Survey was conducted in 17 Arab states between January 19 and March 3, 2020, before the COVID-19 crisis impacted the region. 3,400 face-to-face interviews were conducted by professional interviewers. The interviews were completed in Arabic and English with young Arab men and women. The sample split was 50:50 male/female. The survey covered exclusively young nationals in each state.

The 17 Arab states and territories covered by the Main Survey included five of the Gulf Cooperation Council states (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the UAE), North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia) and the Levant (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, the Palestinian territories, Syria and Yemen).

For the COVID-19 Pulse Survey, 600 face-to-face and online interviews were conducted between August 18 and 26, 2020 among young Arab nationals of six countries in the region - Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The geographic location of the respondents included country capitals and other cities. The additional interviews were conducted to understand the impact of COVID-19 on Arab youth and to validate the findings of the Main Survey.

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#### **About ASDA'A BCW**

ASDA'A was founded in 2000 as an independent agency by Sunil John, who leads the agency in its 20th year. In 2008, WPP acquired a majority stake in the firm and ASDA'A became a part of the Burson-Marsteller global network. After the merger of Burson-Marsteller and Cohn & Wolfe in 2018 to create BCW (Burson Cohn & Wolfe), the firm is now ASDA'A BCW. The agency employs more than 160 professionals across seven wholly-owned offices and nine affiliates in 15 Middle East & North Africa (MENA) countries. The agency serves over 100 retained clients and is the leading PR consultancy in MENA.

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#### **About BCW**

BCW (Burson Cohn & Wolfe), one of the world's largest full-service global communications agencies, is in the business of moving people on behalf of clients. BCW delivers digitally and data-driven creative content and integrated communications programs grounded in earned media and scaled across all channels for



clients in the B2B, consumer, corporate, crisis management,, healthcare, public affairs, purpose and technology sectors. BCW is a part of WPP (NYSE: WPP), a creative transformation company  
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**About PSB**

PSB is a global insights and analytics consultancy. For more than 40 years, PSB has provided actionable insights and guidance for corporate, government and public sector clients in over 100 countries. With deep expertise across qualitative and quantitative research and social and predictive analytics, PSB brings an integrative approach to helping clients solve their most complex challenges and win in highly competitive situations. PSB is a member of the BCW Group of companies, which is part of WPP (NYSE:WPP), a creative transformation company.  
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**For more information, please contact:**

Sunil John/Margaret Flanagan

ASDA' A BCW

Tel: +9714 4507 600

Email: [sunil.john@bcw-global.com](mailto:sunil.john@bcw-global.com); [margaret.flanagan@bcw-global.com](mailto:margaret.flanagan@bcw-global.com)