



Press Release

12th Annual ASDA' A BCW Arab Youth Survey

Arab youth see Saudi Arabia as top regional power, increasing its influence in the Arab world during the past five years

- *Significant majority of Arab youth (78 per cent) see Saudi Arabia as an ally of their country*
- *An overwhelming majority (91 per cent) of young Saudis approve of their government's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic*
- *A majority of young Saudi women say they have more or the same rights as men as well as equal or more access to quality education and jobs*
- *Young Saudis are reporting significant changes in their news consumption behaviours and are driving the e-commerce boom in the Kingdom*

Dubai, UAE; October 6, 2020: Young Arabs in 17 states across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) view Saudi Arabia as the top rising power in the region, with the Kingdom seen as having increased its influence in the Arab world more than any Arab country in the past five years, according to the findings from the 12th Annual ASDA' A BCW Arab Youth Survey, released today.

More than one-third (39 per cent) of Arab youth see the Kingdom as having increased its regional influence the most, with the UAE ranked second at 34 per cent. A significant majority, 78 per cent, view the Kingdom as an ally of their country, showing a clear upward trend over the last five years (from 70 per cent in 2016).

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.

Sunil John, President – Middle East of BCW and Founder of [ASDA' A BCW](https://www.asdaa-bcw.com), said: “The past five years have witnessed remarkable changes in the social, economic and cultural fabric of the Kingdom. The launch of Saudi Vision 2030 in 2016 heralded an era of change with a focus on economic diversification, opening doors to tourism and the roll-out of giga-projects - all designed to transform the economy. Youth clearly view these efforts as having been instrumental in positioning the Kingdom as a rising power, based on the finding that Saudi Arabia has had the most influence on the Arab world during the past five years.”

The survey also shows that an overwhelming majority (91 per cent) of young Saudis approve of the government's response to the pandemic, including 75 per cent who approve *strongly*.



Furthermore, 80 per cent of Saudi youth say their government has responded to COVID-19 better than other governments and only 3 per cent think other governments have outperformed the Saudi response. Young Saudis are also strongly behind the decision to place public health restrictions on the Hajj in order to limit the spread of COVID-19, with 89 per cent supporting the measures.

Highlighting the views of young Saudis on gender rights, the survey reveals that 62 per cent of young Saudi women think they have more (12 per cent) or the same rights (50 per cent) as men, and 74 per cent say they have greater (10 per cent) or equal (64 per cent) access to quality education. Similarly, when it comes to professional opportunities, 67 per cent of young Saudi women say they have better (18 per cent) or same (49 per cent) access to jobs as men. Young Saudi women (64 per cent) and men (63 per cent) both agree that a woman can benefit her family the most if she works full-time or part-time rather than staying at home.

The survey reveals that young Saudis are changing their news consumption habits and are driving the e-commerce boom in the Kingdom. While in 2016 only 14 per cent of Saudi youth reported getting their news on social media, this year 91 per cent cite social media as a source for news. Meanwhile, news consumption on TV among young Saudis has declined from 79 per cent in 2016 to 50 per cent in 2020.

Nearly nine in 10 (87 per cent) of Saudi youth say they shop online, including 39 per cent who do so at least once a month. This marks a massive increase just from two years ago when in 2018 only 58 per cent of the Kingdom's youth reported shopping online.

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

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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; margaret.flanagan@bcw-global.com