

Latest Arab Youth Survey findings

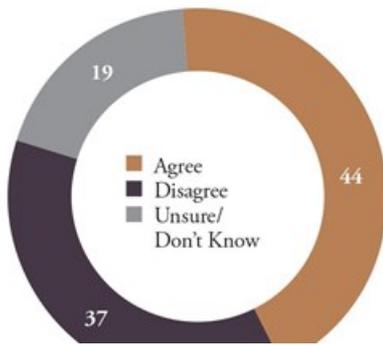
The findings of the eighth Annual ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey have been released and show a region under pressure from political instability, lack of job opportunities and growing worry over Daesh (ISIS) violence.

DAESH HAS ACTIVELY RECRUITED YOUNG PEOPLE.

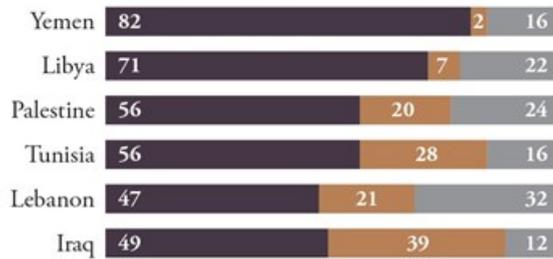
HOW STRONGLY DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE STATEMENT?

"THERE ARE GOOD JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN THE AREA I LIVE IN"

ALL COUNTRIES



MOST SCEPTICAL COUNTRIES



Fewer than half of Arab youth believe there are good job opportunities available to them

These were the key findings:

- Lack of jobs and opportunities seen as the number-one recruitment driver for Daesh.
- Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE) are top allies in the region but Iran's influence is on the rise.
- Arab youth split over whether the U.S. is an ally or enemy
- Five years after fighting for political freedom during the Arab Spring, today most young Arabs prioritise stability over democracy
- The UAE is viewed as a model country for the fifth straight year, and is the most favoured nation to live in and set up a business.

Arab youth say the rise of Daesh (ISIS) remains the single biggest challenge facing the Middle East, but young people in the region overwhelmingly reject the extremist group and believe it will fail to establish an Islamic state.

That is the headline finding of the eighth annual [Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey](#), released 12 April.

While three in four Arab youth are concerned about the rise of Daesh, just one in six believes the terrorist group ultimately will succeed. Though concern is rising – with 50% of youth citing it as the biggest obstacle in the region, up from 37% last year – tacit support for the group is declining with just 13% agreeing they could see themselves supporting Daesh even if it did not use so much violence, compared with 19% in 2015.

A quarter of young people believe that a lack of jobs and opportunities are the main recruitment drivers for the terrorist group, although one in four of those surveyed also said they could see no reason why anyone would want to take up with Daesh.

Arab youth cite Saudi Arabia as their biggest ally for the fifth-year running (31%), followed by the UAE (28%) and the US (25%). But views on the US are increasingly polarised. While two-thirds of young Arabs view the country as an ally, one third see the country as an enemy, especially in Iraq (93%), Yemen (82%) and Palestine (81%).

Iran's increasing regional influence is reflected in the survey, with 13% of young Arabs now viewing the country as their biggest ally – although a small majority of young Arabs (52%) view it as an enemy.

“This is an important survey of how Arab youth – the largest and arguably most important demographic in the region – think about the evolving and challenging environment in which they live,” said Burson-Marsteller worldwide chair and CEO, Donald Baer.

“Today's Arab youth are tomorrow's leaders, business owners, workers and consumers, and the information in this survey helps all of us to reach and understand this group better.”

Five years after the Arab Spring, most young Arabs today are prioritising stability over democracy. In 2016, just 36% of young Arabs think that the Arab world is better off following the uprisings, down from 72% in 2012 at the height of unrest.

The majority of young Arabs (53%) agree that promoting stability in the region is more important than promoting democracy (28%). At the same time, two thirds are calling for their leaders to do more to improve their personal freedoms and human rights.

Twenty-two percent of young Arabs, nearly one in four, cite the UAE as the country they would most like to live in, and just as many say it is the country they would most like their country to emulate. The UAE is also the most attractive country for potential entrepreneurs: of the young Arabs who intend to start their own business in the next five years, a quarter would choose to set up shop in the UAE if they could.

Interviews

International polling firm and Burson-Marsteller subsidiary Penn Schoen Berland (PSB) conducted 3,500 face-to-face interviews with exclusively Arab national men and women aged 18-24 years in the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, including: the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain; Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Yemen. The interviews were conducted from 11 January to 22 February, 2016.

“With 60% of the population below the age of 30, the Arab world is characterised by its vast youth population,” said Burson-Marsteller Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) CEO and global chief strategy officer, Jeremy Galbraith.

“The ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey serves as a barometer of the overarching social, political and economic trends that define the Arab world through the eyes of its youth.”

Sunil John, CEO of ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller, said: “Now in its eighth year, the ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey has established itself as a key referral source across the world, and we hope that by providing this data – which we share as part of our commitment to evidence-based communications and our social responsibility – will add to further dialogue about this important segment of society.”

Key findings

Other key findings from the ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey 2016:

- **Young Arabs believe Sunni-Shia relations are deteriorating and that religion plays too big of a role in the Middle East.** Nearly half (47%) of young Arabs believe that relations between the two sects have worsened in the last five years. More than half of young Arabs (52%) agree that religion plays too big of a role in the Middle East – a notion that extends across the Arab world, with 61% of youth in the GCC; 44% in the Levant (Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine) and Yemen; and 47% in North Africa, agreeing.
- **Young Arabs are divided on the Iranian nuclear deal and the Syrian conflict.** While 45% of young Arabs support the Iranian nuclear deal, 39% oppose it. There are also sharp differences as to whether the Syrian conflict is a proxy war, a revolution or a civil war. Overall, a plurality (39%) of Arab youth view the conflict in Syria as a proxy war fought by regional and global powers; while 29% view it a revolution against the Bashar Al-Assad regime; and 22% believe it is a civil war among Syrians.
- **Arab Youth are increasingly concerned about falling oil prices, but most still believe they are entitled to subsidised energy.** Two in three young Arabs (66%) say they are concerned about falling energy prices, up from 52% in 2015. Nearly four in five Arab youth (78%) still believe they are entitled to subsidised energy costs, and, if their government were to stop subsidising energy, nearly half (49%) believe the subsidies should be stopped only for ex-pats.
- **More young Arabs get their daily news online than from TV or print media.** While 32% say they get their daily news online, 29% say they watch TV news and just seven percent read newspapers daily (down from 13% in 2015). The growing role of social media as a news platform is also apparent, with 52% saying they use Facebook to share interesting news articles they read, up from 41% in 2015.

**In-depth results from the 8th Annual ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey, including survey highlights and a white paper in Arabic and English, are available for*

<http://www.arabyouthsurvey.com/> free download.

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