****

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE NU-Q MEDIA CONTACT**

Robb Wood

+974 4454 5004

[rwood@northwestern.edu](mailto:rwood@northwestern.edu)

**DOHA FILM INSTITUTE MEDIA CONTACT**

Kummam Al-Maadeed

+974 66773570

[kalmaadeed@dohafilminstitute.com](mailto:kalmaadeed@dohafilminstitute.com)

**Nearly Half of Arabs Watch American Films, Yet Most Want More Regional Content: Survey**

***Northwestern University in Qatar, in partnership with Doha Film Institute, release findings from six-nation study of entertainment media use in the Middle East***

* *Two-thirds (66%) of adults from countries surveyed agree that people benefit from watching content from different parts of the world, yet an equal two-thirds say they prefer films that portray their own culture (65%)*
* *Vast majority support tighter regulation of violent and romantic entertainment content*
* *79% say more should be done to preserve cultural traditions, while at the same time 70% want more cultural integration with modern society*
* *Three quarters of internet users say they watch films online*
* *71% of Arabs feel Arab films and television are good for morality, while 15% feel the same about films from the US. 34% feel Hollywood films and television are harmful for morality*
* *Residents of Qatar, host of the 2022 FIFA World Cup, more likely to name sport as favorite television genre than residents of any other country surveyed (28% vs 20% overall)*
* *Full report and an interactive data exploration tool published at* [*mideastmedia.org.*](file:///C:\Users\Riham\Google%20Drive\NU-Q\Media\Press%20Releases\2013\4.2013\Media%20use%20survey%20results\mideastmedia.org)

**Doha, Qatar** *16 April 2014* – Findings from a massive pan-Arab study released today show high region-wide concern about cultural preservation and support for media regulation, but also a general embrace of international content. The survey by Northwestern University in Qatar in partnership with Doha Film Institute reveals 65% of residents in six Arab countries want more content portraying their own culture and history, while an equal number (66%) say people benefit from watching content from different parts of the world. Over 70% region-wide want greater regulation of romantic and violent content.

The “Entertainment Media Use in the Middle East” survey represents 6,035 face-to-face interviews in nationally representative samples of Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates.

Findings from the survey of both media use and cultural attitudes call into question a common perception that modernity and cultural preservation are at odds in the Arab world. While 79% of respondents feel that more should be done to preserve cultural traditions, a nearly similar percentage (70%) agree with the statement that more should be done to integrate their respective cultures with modern society.

“These apparently contradictory findings really are not, but reflect how the Arab world is coping with globalization and still grappling to preserve local culture,” said Everette E. Dennis, dean and CEO of Northwestern University in Qatar.

“Understanding cultural attitudes around entertainment is as important to industry leaders and policymakers as viewership and other audience figures,” said Dennis. “This research provides a base of knowledge for executives across all sectors, including entertainment, sport, and children’s programming.”

A vast majority of adults believe entertainment content should be more regulated for romantic content (69%) and violence (74%). Sixty-eight percent believe films or other entertainment programs should be banned altogether if they are found offensive.

The survey also showed that nearly half of women in the Arab world ‘binge-watch’ TV series (49%), whether online or on television (where ‘binge-watching’ is classified as viewing two or more episodes of a series in the same sitting). Only 31 percent of men surveyed do the same.

"This study is the first of its kind in our region and we believe that the findings will be of great benefit to all sectors of the entertainment industry, from both a commercial and cultural standpoint," said Abdulaziz Al-Khater, CEO of Doha Film Institute.

"What we see from these numbers is a growing demand for locally generated entertainment. The findings reinforce the idea that nurturing a thriving creative industry in our region is vital to enabling the creation of content that accurately reflects Arab culture.”

Northwestern University in Qatar and Doha Film Institute launched the collaborative effort in November. On May 5th, the Qatar-specific findings will be discussed in detail at the Qatar Media Industries Forum, an NU-Q initiative that brings together Qatar’s leading media executives to discuss key issues in Qatari and regional media industries.

This survey, conducted in collaboration with Harris Poll, builds on a similar study focusing on news and information media use in the Arab world, released by NU-Q in the spring of 2013 (menamediasurvey.northwestern.edu).

The survey was conducted from January 27 through February 26, 2014 yielded 6,035 face-to-face interviews with nationally representative samples of adults aged 18 or over from six Arab countries (Qatar, Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and United Arab Emirates). The survey participants answered questions on a wide range of topics, including the role of entertainment media in their lives and related cultural attitudes.

Other findings showed that:

* Saudi Arabia residents are more likely than others to listen to Western music (64%). Internet users in Saudi Arabia are also more likely than others to pay for online content, especially sports (64%).
* Residents of the UAE attend the cinema the most (82%), while those in Tunisia attend the least (15%).
* 58% of adults listed comedy as one of their favorite types of film – more than any other genre.
* 45% of Arabs in the countries surveyed say they watch US films. Thirty-four percent find Hollywood content “harmful to morality” and the same number are of the opinion that Hollywood films do not accurately portray life in the Arab world (35%).
* 65% of adults in all countries believe government oversight helps produce higher quality entertainment.

A more detailed summary of the methodology, sample and weighting can be found at mideastmedia.org.

*Keywords: NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY IN QATAR, DOHA FILM INSTITUTE, ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA SURVEY, MENA MEDIA STUDY, MEDIA RESEARCH, MEDIA SURVEY, ARAB MEDIA, MIDDLE EAST MEDIA, TELEVISION, SAUDI ARABIA, EGYPT, TUNISIA, COMEDY, BINGE WATCHING, CENSORSHIP, REGULATION, FILM PRODUCTIONS*

-- ENDS --

**About Northwestern University in Qatar**

Northwestern University in Qatar draws from its parent organization, [Northwestern University](http://www.qatar.northwestern.edu/)(Evanston, Illinois), a distinguished history, famous programs and an exceptional faculty. Founded in partnership with Qatar Foundation, NU-Q provides a framework through which students explore the world and, ultimately, shape its future through its distinguished schools of [communication](http://www.communication.northwestern.edu/), [journalism](http://www.medill.northwestern.edu/), and [liberal arts](http://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/).

**About Doha Film Institute**

Doha Film Institute is an independent, not-for-profit cultural organisation established in 2010. It organically supports the growth of the local film community by enhancing industry knowledge, cultivating film appreciation and contributing to the development of sustainable creative industries in Qatar. Doha Film Institute’s platforms include funding and production of local, regional and international films, educational programmes, film screenings, the Ajyal Youth Film Festival and the Qumra Doha Film Festival. With culture, community, education and entertainment at its foundation, the Doha Film Institute serves as an all-encompassing film hub in Doha, as well as a resource for the region and the rest of the world.Doha Film Institute is committed to supporting Qatar’s 2030 vision for the development of a knowledge-based economy.