Urban population refers to people living in urban areas as defined by national statistical offices. Urban population ratio is the number of persons residing in an area defined as "urban" in the national context per 100 total population.

Increasing urban population ratio may signify the demographic transition from rural to urban, and may be associated with shifts from an agriculture-based economy to industry and service-led urbanised economy.

Urban areas may generate more jobs and higher income, and may deliver quality education, health care and other services. They may also present opportunities for social mobilisation and women's empowerment.

In 2017, half of the OIC countries group population (50%) lived in urban areas, an 8.1-percentage-points increase compared to that in 2000.

The urban population ratio of the OIC countries group in 2017 was lower than that of the Developed countries group (81.9%) and World (54.8%) but was very close to that of the Non-OIC Developing countries group (50.5%).

At the individual OIC country level, 9 OIC countries (mostly Arab countries in the Gulf region) including Kuwait, Qatar, Jordan, Bahrain, Gabon, Lebanon, UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Oman had urban population ratios over 80% in 2017.

On the other hand, the percentage of the population in urban areas was below 30% in 8 OIC countries (mostly in Sub-Saharan Africa) including Comoros, Burkina Faso, Tajikistan, Guyana, Afghanistan, Uganda, Chad, and Niger.

Moreover, 23 OIC countries were observed to have an urban population ratio between 50% and 80%. 17 OIC countries were observed to have the same ratio between 30% and 50%.

The magnitude of urban population growth varied considerably across OIC countries during the period 2000-2017.

The share of urban population in total population increased more than 10 percentage points in 17 OIC countries including Albania, Mauritania, Nigeria, Malaysia, Mali, Gambia, Indonesia, Jordan, Bangladesh, Algeria, Oman, Maldives, Somalia, Burkina Faso, Iran, Cameroon, and Gabon in the past 17 years.

In this period, urban population ratio increased between 5 and 10 percentage points in 15 OIC countries.

However, urban population have seen a decrease in 3 OIC countries, namely Guyana, Suriname, and Egypt from 2000 to 2017.

Source: SESRIC staff calculations based on data extracted on 08/04/2019 from World Bank World Development Indicators Database. Please visit OIC Statistics (OICStat) Database (http://bit.ly/2F7W8cv) for other Demography indicators.