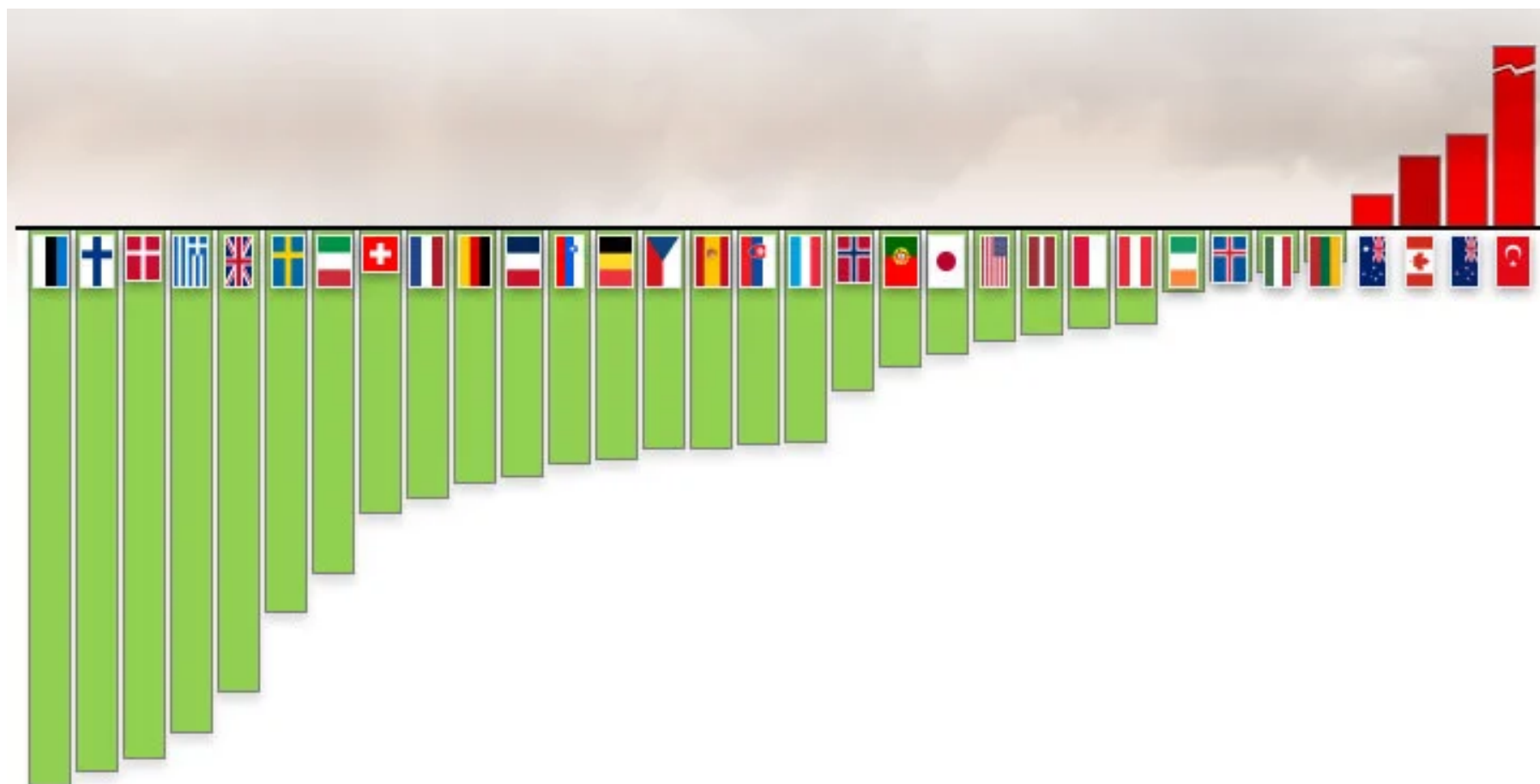


Canada is a rogue super-emitter

By [Barry Saxifrage](#) | Analysis | April 14th 2022

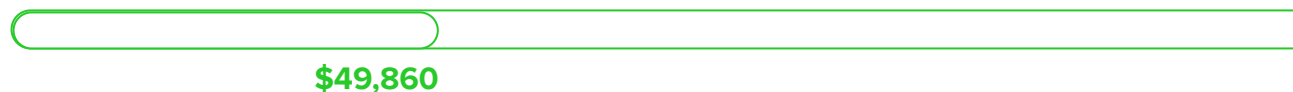
#1985 of 1985 articles from the Special Report: [Reports from the Race to a Safer World](#)



GREAT JOURNALISM TAKES TIME AND MONEY.

We need \$150,000 by May 31 to accelerate urgent climate coverage. Will you pitch in?

Goal: \$150k



\$49,860

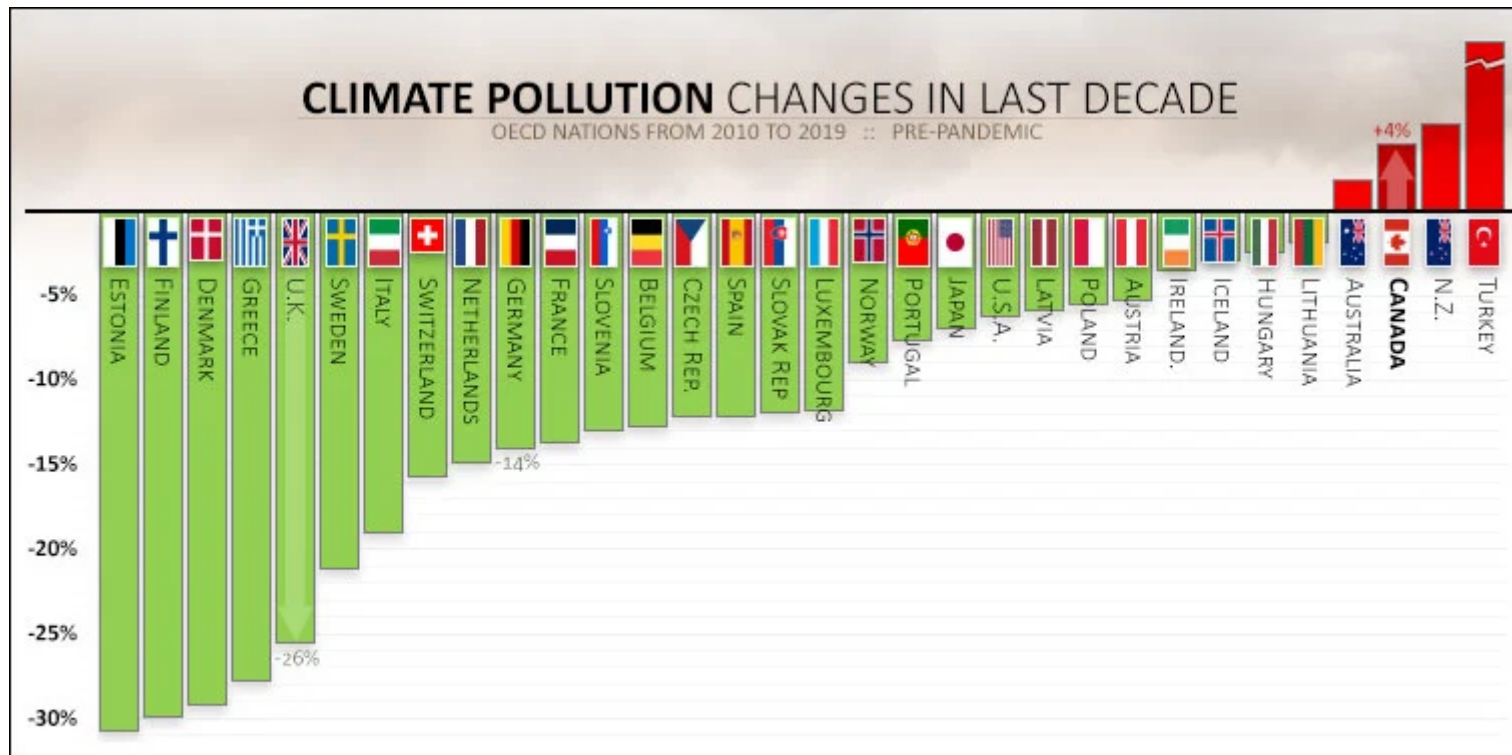
[Donate](#)[▶ Listen to article](#)

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development ([OECD](#)) is a group of developed nations working together to advance democracy and the market economy. Combined, these nations generate around half the world's GDP.

Over the last decade, as the climate crisis started to hammer away with increasing speed and fury, most of these nations reduced their climate pollution.

Canada was one of the few still cranking it higher.

Take a look.



OECD NATIONS PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN GHGs – 2010 to 2019 – Without LULUCF. Note: insufficient data for six OECD nations: Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Israel, Korea, Mexico. Turkey emissions were +27%. Data Source: OECD Dataset at stats.OECD.org. CHART by Barry Saxifrage at VisualCarbon.org and NationalObserver.com. April 2022.

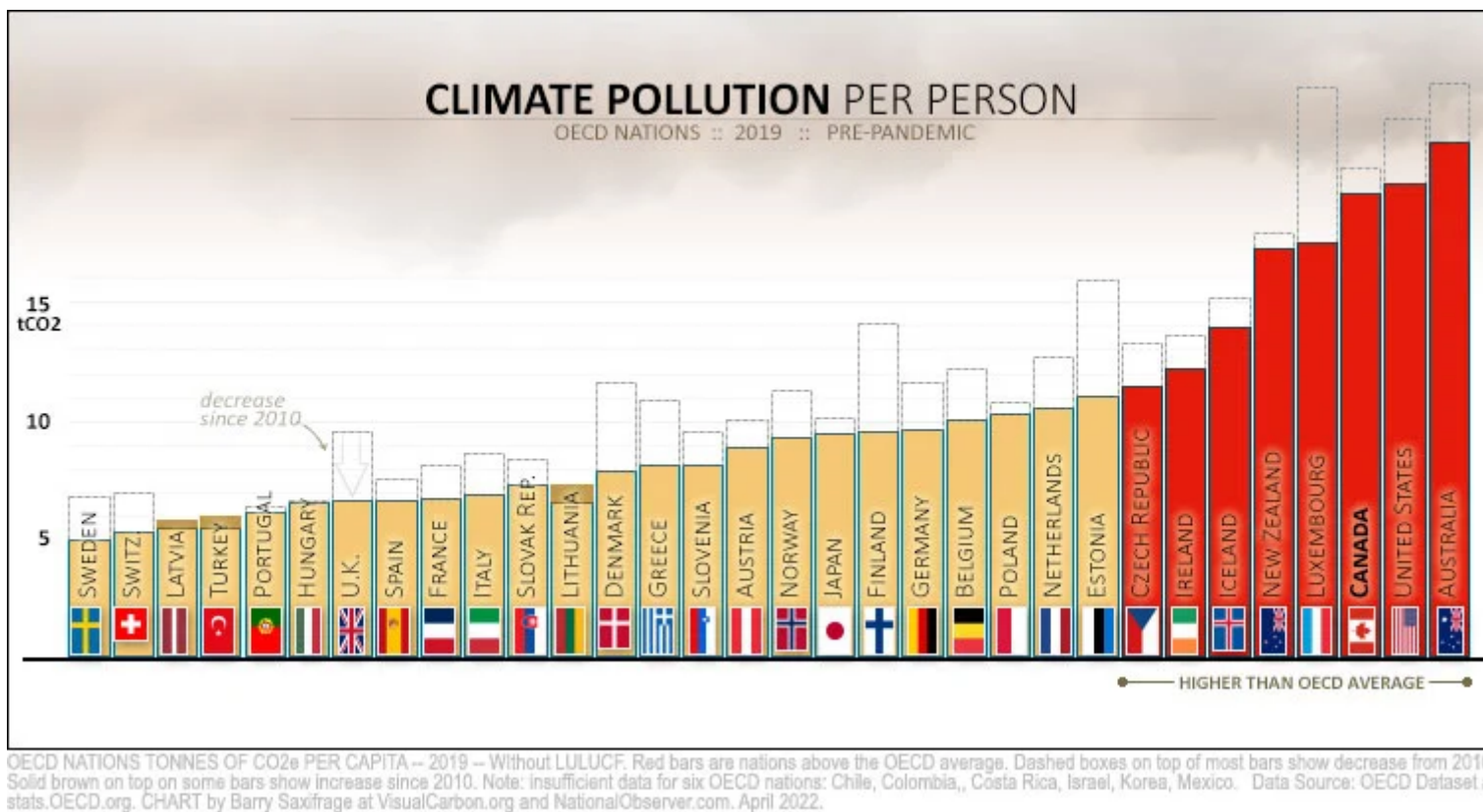
Percentage change in emissions during the pre-pandemic decade, 2010 through 2019. That's the last year of data available from the OECD. Six OECD nations aren't on the chart because of incomplete data.

The green bars on the chart show that 28 OECD nations reduced emissions over the last decade. Some by a lot. And most nations that cut emissions also showed strong economic gains. For example, five of the nations with the largest percentage of emissions cuts — Estonia (-31 per cent), Finland (-30 per cent), Denmark (-29 per cent), United Kingdom (-26 per cent), and Sweden (-21 per cent) — all saw their economies grow as fast, or faster, than Canada. *Note: For economic comparisons, I used "GDP in current US dollars" from International Monetary Fund [data](#).*

Speaking of Canada, the red bars show that we are in a small outlier group of OECD nations that increased emissions over the last decade. When it comes to doing our fair share in the fight for a safe climate future, this data shows how out of step Canada is with most of our peer nations.

Per person

My second chart shows emissions per person. Once again, Canada is at the very extreme end when it comes to climate polluting.



The bars show tonnes of climate pollution (tCO₂) per capita for the pre-pandemic year of 2019. Red bars highlight the nations that emit more than the OECD average. Dashed bars show reductions from 2010.

As the chart shows, Canadians emit 20 tCO₂ per person. That's twice as much as the Germans and three times as much as the British.

More discouragingly, the chart also shows that Canada has been dragging its feet on reducing our oversized emissions per person. You can see this by looking at the dashed boxes that sit on top of most of the bars. These indicate reductions since 2010. For example, the small, dashed box on Canada's bar shows we only reduced our emissions per person by a small amount over the last decade — just five per cent. The Americans' dashed box is far larger, showing they reduced more than twice as much as we did — cutting 12 per cent. That's also the average reduction across all OECD nations. The Germans managed to cut even more at 17 per cent. While the British cut 30 per cent, which was six times more than Canadians.

Climate leader or climate rogue?

The Canadian government likes to call itself a "climate leader." A quick look at what our OECD peer nations have done, however, makes "climate rogue" seem far more appropriate. As these charts make clear, we consistently show up at the most-polluting end of the rankings — both for how much climate harm we cause and for how shockingly little we've done to rein it in.

We know what policies work to cut emissions. And we know which technologies lower emissions and which ones make them worse. If we wanted to, Canada could make sizable reductions in our emissions by adopting the best practices proven to work in many of our peer nations.

For example, we could adopt the United Kingdom's successful [Carbon Budget Law](#) that's helped cut its emissions in half while ours went up. We could [align our carbon pricing](#) with our European peers to make polluters pay their fair share. We could adopt Norway's successful [electric vehicle policies](#) that have led to [90 per cent](#) of its new car sales being powered by super-clean, locally produced electricity – versus just five per cent here in Canada.

We have lots of options. Being a rogue super-emitter isn't the only one we have to choose from.

Keep reading



Ticking time bombs: Thousands of abandoned oil wells threaten Ontario communities

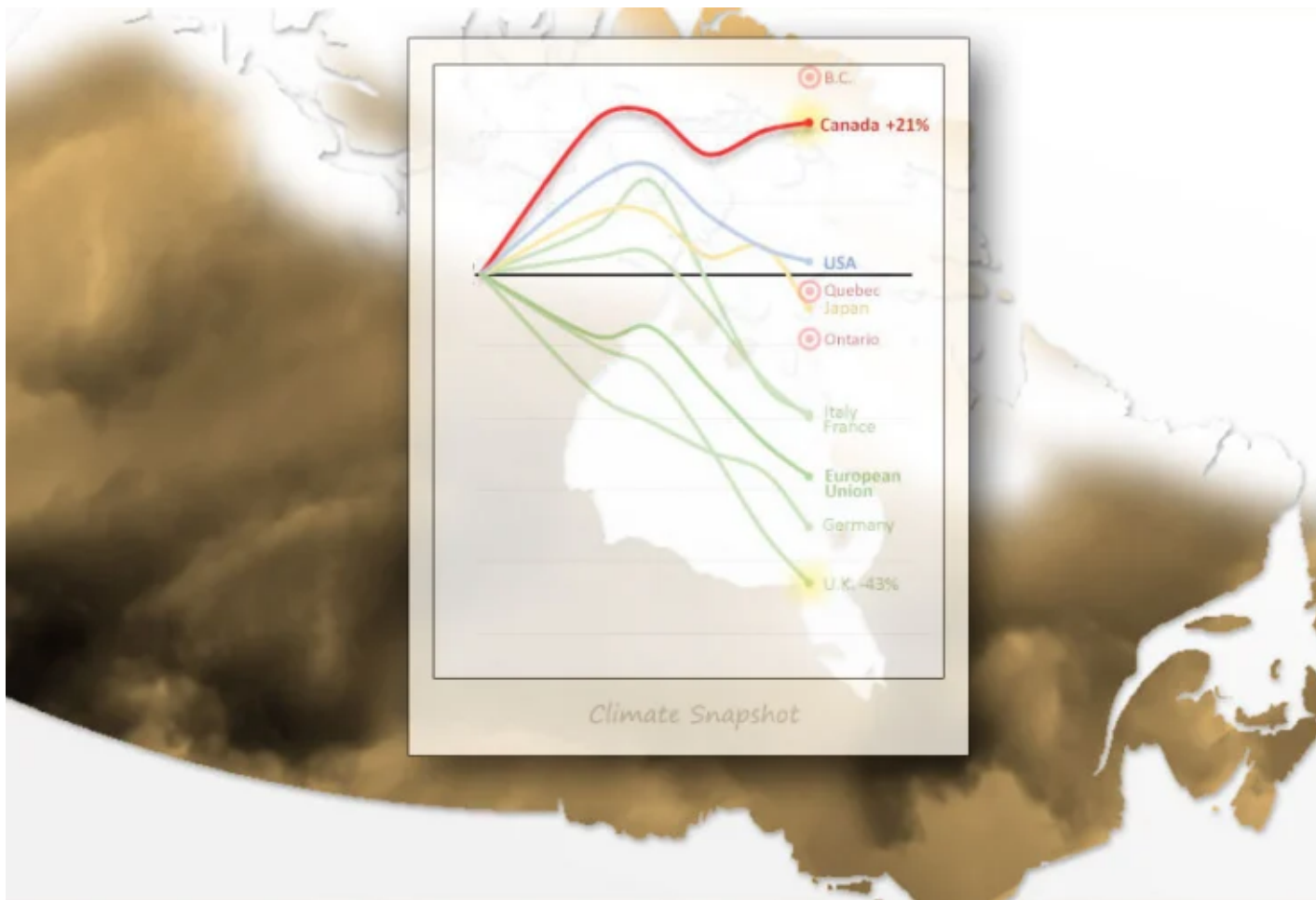
By Jessica McDiarmid | News | April 12th 2022



Canada's failure to cut emissions is coming back to bite us

By Barry Saxifrage | Analysis | April 11th 2022

in Reports from the Race to a Safer World



Wrong-way Canada emitting more while our G7 peers clean up

By Barry Saxifrage | Analysis | March 23rd 2022

in Reports from the Race to a Safer World

Comments

Post a comment

Laurel Thompson | 2 hours ago

The IPCC should sanction Canada.

Reply

Judy Christenson | 2 hours ago

Canada is an embarrassment

Reply

© Observer Media Group 2022